

# MILITARY ILLUSTRATED

□ PAST & PRESENT

No. 12  
April/May 1988  
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**French Infantry  
1870**

**Israeli Women's  
Corps, 1948-88**

**Free Polish Paras,  
1941-47**

**Spanish Louisiana,  
1780s**

**Medieval Jacks  
& Brigandines**

**Burnaby  
at Abu Klea**





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No.12

ISSN 0268-8328

APRIL/MAY 1988

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Our cover illustration shows a reconstruction of a French Line Infantryman, 1870 — see article starting on p.16

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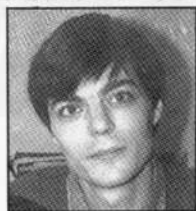
# EDITORIAL

We are delighted to welcome to our pages for the first, but we hope not the last time, the respected French uniform historian **Louis Delpérier**. Born in 1954, he holds a doctorate in history and a reserve commission, and is as interested in contemporary as in 19th century military subjects. The author of several books, and more than 60 articles on French uniform history, he was recently the military consultant for the film *Champ d'Honneur*, set during the Franco-Prussian War, which was shown at the Cannes Festival in May 1987.

**Francis Back**, who illustrates our old friend René Chartrand's article on the Louisiana Regt., was born in 1959 in Montréal, where he lives and works. He studied art in Switzerland; has done primary research on the military, civilian and Indian costumes of early Canada; and now specialises in historical illustrations. His work ranges from schoolbooks, museum and historic park displays, and treatments for screen productions, to plates for the Company of Military Historians in the USA.

## 'The Scottish Soldier'

The Scottish Military Collectors Society, 17/24 St. Andrews Crescent, Pollokshields, Glasgow G41 5SH points out that in our review of Stephen Wood's book of this title ('MI' No.10, p.36) we omitted to say that the book is available from



Francis Back



Louis Delpérier

the Society at that address; and that the overseas price is £13.85. We apologise for this oversight.

## The Victorian Military Society

An unavoidable mis-match between our copy dates and the dates of their specific events has prevented us from mentioning until now the very active programme of this Society, which is recommended to all with an interest in 19th century campaigns. The VMS publishes a free quarterly journal and a periodic newsletter, with substantial illustrated articles and up-dates on imminent events and recent publications. Special publications also appear from time

to time; and a number of study groups cover specific campaigns. The annual Victorian Military Fair in London is spectacular for a 'single interest' group, and is recommended. Annual subscriptions (£9.00, UK; £10.00 sterling, or \$20.00, or equiv. £15.00 in other currency, overseas) should be addressed to G. Dibley, Hon. Treasurer, VMS, Arm Farm Cottage, Blisworth Arm, Northampton NN7 3EF.

## Confederate uniforms

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## 1798 'training handkerchief'

The National Army Museum can now supply an unusual and attractive reproduction of a military handkerchief printed in sepia and cerise with the sword exercise for mounted and dismounted Yeomanry, taken from a (very slightly larger) original in the NAM collection. The reproduction, 19ins. square, costs £4.00 (trade, £3.00, minimum order five). Long and laborious research and experiment went into producing this most imaginative souvenir, for which NAM is to be congratulated.

support. The opening credits are screened over black-and-white newsreel footage of the Korean War, recalling the eponymous battle in which the film's hero is supposed to have won the Congressional Medal of Honor; but the story is set in 1983. The ageing USMC Gunnery Sgt. Tom Highway (Clint Eastwood) is released from the brig after a drunk-and-disorderly charge, and transferred back to his old combat outfit, the 2nd Marine Division. Assigned to restore discipline and morale to a reconnaissance platoon, he has to contend with recalcitrant recruits, a 'textbook' superior officer, and the disturbing presence behind the bar of a local saloon of his ex-wife, Aggie.

The rôle of 'Gunny' Highway is ideal for Eastwood, and gives him ample opportunity to exercise familiar mannerisms. He also satirises his own macho screen persona to some extent — anxiously reading women's magazines in the hope of picking up tips on 'caring relationships' in an attempt at a reconciliation with Aggie!

Much of the film is taken up with training sequences, but there is a sudden change of location with the American invasion of Grenada in October 1983. Highway and his men destroy a roadblock, rescue American students (though it is never quite clear from what), and exceed orders to take a strategic hill. The film endorses the official American position that Cuban regulars were present in strength, a view not universally accepted. Unfortunately, the action sequences generate little in the way of tension or excitement, and form a poor climax to a disappointing film.

Haskell Wexler's *Latino* (1985) is also set in 1983, but in Nicaragua. Two Mexican-American 'Green Berets', Lt. Eddie Guerrero (Robert Beltran) and Sgt. Ruben Trevino (Tony Plana) are given a secret mission: detached from the 'Big Pine II' manoeuvres in Honduras, they take over the training of a group of Contra guerrillas mainly composed of ex-Samosa regime National Guardsmen, and take part in small-scale raids into Nicaragua. Eddie becomes increasingly disenchanted with the Contras' brutality towards civilians with whom he feels a deepening sympathy, his awareness being heightened by his relationship with Marlena, a Nicaraguan agronomist working in Honduras.

Ordered to lead a raid deep into Nicaragua against El Porvenir, an agricultural co-operative which military intelligence mistakenly believes to be the cover for a Cuban base, Eddie is uneasy about 'going in sterile' — i.e. without any form of identification which could embarrass his government and provide propaganda for 'bleeding-heart liberals' in the event of his becoming a casualty. He leads his men towards the target, unaware that Marlena is now working there, and that his group has been spotted by Nicaraguan forces...

# ON THE SCREEN

## Video Releases:

'Top Gun' (CIC: 15)

'Heartbreak Ridge'

(Warner Home Video: 18)

'Latino' (CBS/Fox: 15)

'Salvador' (Vestron: 18)

The four releases reviewed here all have some connection with recent military action or involvement, real or fictional, by the US government, but they demonstrate quite different political attitudes.

Tony Scott's *Top Gun* (1986) opens on an American aircraft carrier in the Indian Ocean. When some MiG-28s approach the ship, two patrolling F-14 Tomcats bluff the 'enemy' fighters into turning away. After a successful mission Lt. Pete 'Maverick' Mitchell (Tom Cruise) is informed that in spite of his undisciplined flying he and his 'back-seater', Lt. Nick 'Goose'

Bradshaw, are to be sent to the US Navy's school for elite fighter pilot training at Miramar, California — 'Top Gun'. There the crews compete to be the 'best of the best'. A demanding programme of training soon teaches Mitchell the importance of teamwork. Though his confidence is shaken when Nick is killed during a forced 'bang-out' over the sea, he still finds time to romance the glamorous lecturer

played by Kelly McGillis.

Re-assigned to his old ship, Mitchell soon has the opportunity to use his newly acquired skills in earnest. Scrambled to protect a US warship drifting out of control into 'enemy' waters, Mitchell's flight of four F-14s are attacked by a superior force of MiGs. The final dogfight sequence doubtless takes its inspiration from the incident in August 1981 when two F-14s from the USS *Nimitz* shot down two Libyan Su-22s over the Gulf of Sidra. In the film the 'enemy' are never identified, being represented by Northrop F-5s in fantasy markings, but they are clearly intended to be understood as Russian, or Russian surrogates.

Overall, the film is undemanding and adolescent nonsense; but it predictably enjoyed phenomenal box-office success largely on the strength of the flying sequences, which are superbly photographed, and knowingly screened with an exciting 'rock' soundtrack. It is worth seeing for the aerial sequences alone, but leaves the impression of being an extended recruiting film.

The US Marine Corps doubtless hoped that Clint Eastwood's *Heartbreak Ridge* (1985) would perform the same function, until adverse publicity induced them to withdraw



'Gunny' Tom Highway (Clint Eastwood) encourages a recruit through a water obstacle in *Heartbreak Ridge*. Though obviously suited in age, looks and persona to the rôle of a gravel-voiced veteran NCO, Eastwood suffers from a script which never reconciles the demands of drama, humour and characterisation; and the action sequences suffer embarrassingly from comparison with some of the recently released Vietnam War treatments.



American intervention in Central America is also the theme of Oliver Stone's *Salvador* (1986); the film is based on the real-life experiences of photo-journalist Richard Boyle, who co-wrote the script with the director. Boyle (James Woods) returns to Salvador in 1980 with 'Dr. Rock', an unemployed disc-jockey (James Belushi), in search of work and cheap high living. He renews his acquaintanceship with fellow photographer John Cassady (John Savage) and with a former girlfriend; but he finds that things have changed since his previous trip. The extreme right-wing leader 'Major Max' — whose real-life counterpart is all too obvious — is declaring for the presidency, supported by his murderous 'death squads'. Boyle and Cassady take pictures of the

The film is based largely on fact, although it compresses events which in reality took place between 1980 and 1982. The forceful narrative drive and well-staged action scenes have resulted in a frenetic and at times harrowing film. Despite its poor box-office returns, it established Stone as a film-maker of considerable talent — a reputation more than justified by his subsequent *Platoon*. **Stephen J. Greenhill**

continued on page 6

Boxed semi-display ☐ Normal lineage insertion ☐



risen in value steadily, if not spectacularly, is militaria, with Home Service pattern helmets reaching well in excess of £200, and in some cases fetching more than £400. Apart from the inevitable annual increases, antique firearms do not seem, on the whole, to have altered very markedly in value.

Confidence in the market appears to be reflected in the associated field of arms fairs as the number of actual and projected events of this type continues to grow. Since the number of collectors and dealers is limited, it is a matter for conjecture how many of these events the market can sustain. It may be that the majority of collectors do not like travelling far afield, and may therefore tend to patronise local events, to the detriment of attendances at the bigger 'national' fairs. Against this, collectors may tend to

concentrate their efforts on well-known and well-established fairs, in which case the smaller local events will be the losers.

Another factor which may affect the field of antique firearms is the possibility that the Amendment to the 1968 Firearm Act currently before Parliament may lead to a relaxation of the definition of antique firearms. Such a change might allow the possession without a firearm certificate of such weapons as Sniders and other black powder firearms. Should this happen, then demand among previously frustrated collectors would almost certainly push up the price of such pieces.

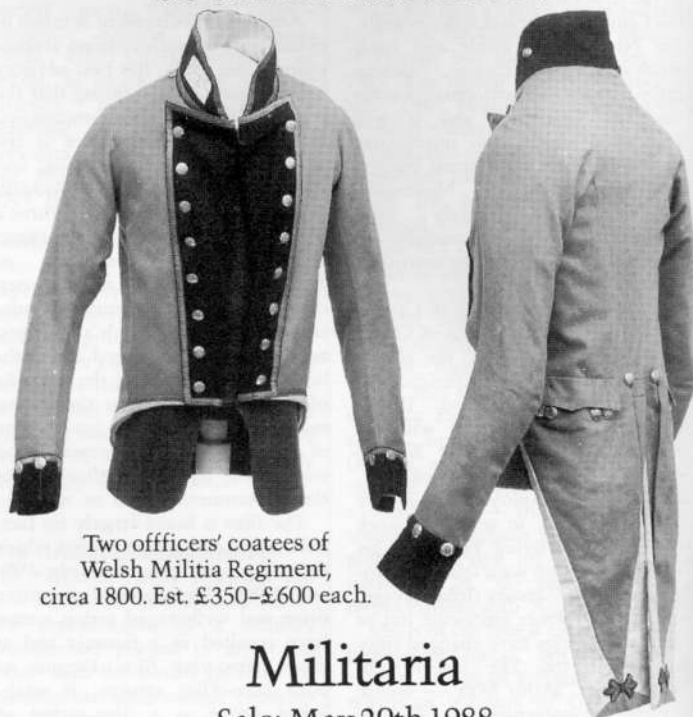
If there is one expectation that is certain to be realised in 1988, it is that everything in arms, armour, militaria and medals will be more expensive. **Frederick Wilkinson**

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# HEYL NASHIM

## The Israel Defence Forces Women's Corps, 1948-88

SAMUEL M. KATZ  
Paintings by ANGUS McBRIDE

On any Friday morning at Tel Aviv's central bus station, the scene is uniquely Israeli. Thousands of soldiers on cherished weekend leave race impatiently among the tourists and travellers searching for the fastest means to get home before SHABBAT<sup>(1)</sup>. At a closer glance one notices that many of these soldiers are women. Many manage to wear their 'Class A' olives and khakis as fashionably as is possible with a military uniform; others slop along in fatigues, carrying weapons. Some come from bases as far away as Eilat or the Lebanese border; others have only had to walk the few blocks from KIRYAH, the IDF main headquarters. These women serve in a wide variety of ranks, capacities and units, and come from a broad range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. But they all share the bond of belonging to one of the most publicised, yet least understood organisations of the IDF: 'CHEN', the Women's Corps.

In 1986 the CHEN commander (KTZINAT CHEN RASHIT), Col. Amira Dotan, became the first woman promoted to the rank of brigadier-general in the IDF. Pictured here in her previous rank, Brig.Gen. Dotan was born in 1947 in Tel Aviv; read degree courses in behavioural sciences and clinical psychology; and completed the IDF officer's course in 1965, subsequently serving with the MPs. Among later posts, she was the Women's Corps officer for Southern Command HQ; and initiated and commanded the Women's Officer Course, BA'HAD 12. She became Chief Women's Corps Officer in 1982.

In concrete terms, she commands nothing; but she is the advisor to the Chief of Staff on all matters pertaining to women personnel, and supervises postings, morale, field conditions, and career advancement for women. She is also a guidance counsellor, whose staff help women resolve problems encountered during military service. Brig.Gen. Dotan is married, with three children, and lives in Beersheba.

The acronym for HEYL NASHIM ('Women's Corps'), CHEN is also the Hebrew word for 'charm'. The popular image of the 'charming' SABRA soldier posing in a citrus grove, or fighting off border infiltrators UZI in hand, is as misconceived today as it has nearly always been. CHEN is a support service, not a combat arm — though only 39% of its soldiers serve in traditional support rôles. The IDF's egalitarian ideals, and chronic shortage of manpower, have allowed Israeli servicewomen to take over tasks once reserved for men. Today they can be found in every branch of the IDF, and in capacities as varied as secretaries, KFIR C-2 jet aeronautical engineers, and parachute jump instructors.

In one sense 'Women's Corps' is a misnomer: CHEN does not exist as a separate organisation within the IDF, and is termed a 'corps' for lack of any more logical title. Women are completely inte-



grated into the various branches of the IDF, and after basic training most of the women soldiers never have anything more to do with CHEN, as such, throughout the rest of their service.

CHEN was formed on 28 May 1948 to fulfil the following defensive requirements: (a) the indirect reinforcement of IDF combat forces by filling administrative, professional and support rôles, to release as many men as possible for combat assignments; (b) the contribution of women as citizens to the security and defence of the state; and (c), participation in the IDF's educational and nation-building rôle, by helping to absorb and educate immigrant and disadvantaged youth and citizens. With the growth of the IDF, CHEN has evolved far beyond this original function.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Women have been actively involved in the defence of the Jewish homeland since large-scale migration to Palestine

began in the late 19th century. The early Zionists promoted equality of the sexes; and women played a large part in the first organised Jewish fighting force in Palestine, HASHOMER ('the Guard'). During the First World War Sarah Aahronson ran the highly successful NILI espionage network assisting the British against the Turks (and when captured, committed suicide rather than risk betraying her comrades).

In 1920 three women fighters died in the battle of Tel Hai, the isolated northern outpost commanded by the legendary Joseph Trumpeldor. In the struggle for an independent Jewish state women joined many underground groups, serving as full combatants in IRGUN and LEHI. Two of the most famous fighters in the ruthless Stern Gang were women: the 16-year-old Geula Cohen, today an ultra-right-wing KNESSET member, operated the group's successful clandestine radio station; and Leah Granak enjoyed an awesome

<sup>1</sup>Since -written Hebrew has no 'lower case' letters, small capitals have been used here to transliterate proper names.



reputation even among the British as the Gang's top demolitions expert.

In the HAGANAH (Jewish underground army) and its élite PAL'MACH strike companies women received extensive weapons training, and made up a third of the total strength of the latter. They served mainly in support rôles, however; and achieved their greatest notoriety as weapons smugglers, since polite British soldiers often declined to body-search them. By 1941 the HAGANAH had over 10,000 women soldiers.

During the Second World War Palestinian Jewish women, as well as men, volunteered to help the British war effort. Over 4,000 joined the British ATS, serving in Egypt, Italy, and — towards the end of the war — helping Holocaust survivors. Two of them, the poetess Hannah Sennesh and Havivah Reik, were part of an élite 32-member intelligence unit parachuted into Europe to organise Jewish partisans and to provide transit for escaping Allied prisoners. Both were eventually caught, tortured and executed by the SS.

The 1948 War of Independence was the only one of Israel's wars in which

women actually fought as combatants, beside the men, on all fronts. In Tel Aviv women anti-aircraft spotters and Bren gun crews helped fight off Egyptian air raids. A young German-born refugee, Rachel Stahl, commanded a PAL'MACH company in attacks on the northern town of Tzfat (Safed). In the southern desert women fought gal-

lantly in the ranks of the PAL'MACH's 'NEGEV' Brigade in defence of isolated and heavily outnumbered settlements. In the bitter battle for Jerusalem HAGANAH women, most notably in the PAL'MACH's 'HAREL' Brigade, fought Arab irregulars and Arab Legion troops. A woman pilot, Yael Rom, even flew combat missions with the infant Israeli Air

Force. In all, 12,000 women served in the newly formed TZAVA HAGANAH L'YISRAEL ('Israel Defence Forces') during the 1948 War, and many were killed or wounded.

The establishment of the IDF removed the need for women to serve at the front; but the IDF's small size and crucial rôle in building a sense of national identity obliged women to continue to contribute to all other aspects of national defence. Although officially forbidden front-line duty, many individuals continued to fill rôles which took them into danger. During the 1956 Sinai Campaign three female Air Force officers — Capt. Yael Rom, Yael Finkelshtein and Rina Levinson — were among the C-47 pilots who flew the 202nd Parachute Brigade to the Mitla Pass jump. In 1967 women worked feverishly to fill the gaps in manpower created by total mobilisation; as communications, logistics and intelligence officers they advanced with their units close to the fighting line, and a number of them were wounded.

The 1967 victory revolutionised the IDF: from a small defensive force securing the integrity of Israel's borders, it developed into a



#### Above:

*War of Independence, 1948: the driver of a 'sandwich'-armoured truck, a member of the PAL-MACH's HAREL Bde., prepares for her perilous journey to Jerusalem via the Bab-el-Wad, scene of many bloody ambushes and massacres. The slogan reads 'Victory or Death'. (HAGANAH Archives)*

#### Left:

*Excellent view of female officers' uniforms of 1950. Left: Armoured Corps; 'Class A' battledress; black 'male' beret with red-backed insignia of crossed cannons over sword-and-branch General Service badge — Armoured Corps badge not yet introduced. Second left: Air Force; blue-grey 'male' beret with 1948 'wings'-style badge; white 'Class A' blouse under khaki sweater; blue rank shoulder-straps with first lieutenant rank bars in early flat style. Second right: Navy captain (all services use same ranks); dyed navy blue battledress; white 'Class A' shirt; Navy 'female' beret. Right: General Service first lieutenant; olive-khaki battledress over 'Class A' shirt and tie in shades of olive; greenish-khaki beret. (IGPO)*







**Above:**

Women's dress white uniform, IDF/Navy, 1965 — note the white-piped black cap, and the small yellow metal badge of superimposed sword, branch and anchor, now no longer worn on rating's headgear. (IGPO)

**Right:**

Although the battledress 'Class A' uniform for women began to disappear from the last years of the 1960s, it was some time before it was entirely phased out, and a number of different models were produced. This lightweight blue-grey dacron battledress blouse-and-slacks combination is worn in 1976 by Cpl. Orly Elyakim, an IDF/Air Force MORAH HAYELET. (Courtesy Uzi Butman)

**Right centre:**

An Air Force air defence instructor prepares to demonstrate a 'Redeye' SAM. She wears the tan-khaki cotton 'Class A' uniform, with three-pocket blouse worn outside the skirt; note blue-grey 'beret' with red combat-unit badge backing, and Air Defence unit tag on left shoulder strap. (Yoni Reif/IDF Spokesman)

regional 'super power'. With all available men stationed on borders now extended four-fold, the rôle of women became even more crucial. All along the newly-defined frontiers the NA'HA'L ('fighting youth') organisation set up defended agricultural settlements, with women standing guard a stone's throw from hostile borders.

In 1973, although most women were evacuated from the front hours before the Arab attacks, three serving at forward command posts were killed. The 1973 War also created two heroines: Capt. Osnat Zahir and 1st Lt. Dina Zaltz, serving with combat units in Sinai, worked around the clock to care for hundreds of casualties who were brought in during the first days of fighting, and were both awarded the Chief of Staff's commendation for bravery (TZA'LA'SH HA'RA'-MAT'KAL). It was at this time that women stepped in to fill gaps caused by the large-scale post-war border postings, becoming tank and artillery instructors — duties at which they excelled, and continue to perform today.

By Operation 'Peace for Galilee' in June 1982 the integration of CHEN within the IDF was complete. In the rear, women fulfilled all the communications, logistic and intelligence needs of the

troops fighting in Lebanon: women maintained fighter aircraft, analysed aerial recce photographs, and supervised communications, command and control functions for units in the field. Today, no IDF unit could perform its allotted task without the contribution of CHEN.

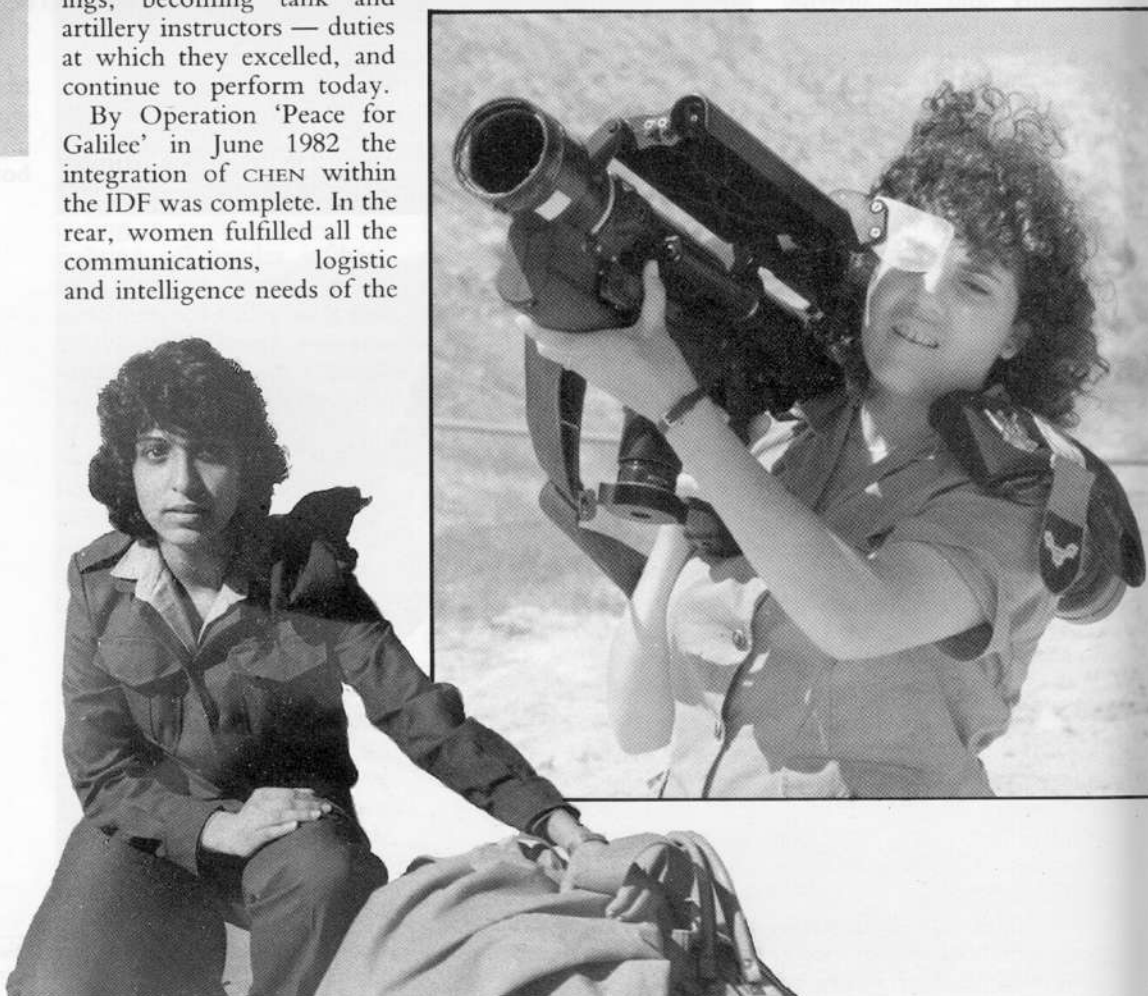
### TRAINING AND SERVICE

Under the 1959 Military Service Law, all women reaching the age of 18 are conscripted into the IDF for two years (men serve for three). Thereafter they are required to serve in the Reserves until the age of 35, though few are recalled later than their 24th birthday. Married women, pregnant women, women with criminal records, and women able to prove contrary religious convictions are exempt.

This last exemption is highly controversial. Most secular Israelis believe all citizens should help carry the burden of national defence.

(Some women pretend to resist service on religious grounds, only to be caught by plain-clothes MPs lying on the beach in bikinis on the SHABBAT or on religious holidays!) Some girls marry close to their 18th birthday in order to avoid conscription. Ironically, it is in many cases the less well educated who claim exemption — girls for whom the Army is their best hope of success in later life. Most women do serve, however; it is a recognised 'rite of passage' for citizenship, and without it a university place or a good job is much harder to achieve.

Women begin their two years in uniform at BA'KU'M, the reception and assignment establishment. Basic training lasts four weeks, and includes military discipline and orientation, field training, basic weapons training with the UZI and M-16, and sexual education. An extensive series of psychological examinations determines the eventual posting; and the





difference between a boring secretarial job or a challenging Army career depends on these exams. Basic training also gives the 18-year-old her first opportunity to mature, to mix with girls from widely different backgrounds, and to find her feet away from home.

Upon graduation, many go on to their new units for on-the-job training as secretaries and clerks. Those who have tested well in basic, and prove capable, are sent on one of the hundreds of different profession courses run by the different branches of service, to qualify as anything from a parachute packer, a company clerk, or a technician of some kind, to a GAD'NA ('youth battalion') instructor. Although many are asked which course they prefer, most in fact receive what is available.

The most desirable positions require preliminary training courses lasting from two to six months, known as KADA'TZ ('pre-military'). KADA'TZ jobs include radar operator, aerial recce photo analyst, 'soldier-teacher' (see below), and various jobs in intelligence. These are considered the most rewarding and glamorous openings for women; but many girls are deterred from volunteering by the requirement for the pre-military course, which does not count towards their 24 months. A post-high school teenager would rather spend the time before call-up relaxing on the beach, earning some money, or travelling abroad. The extra time for KADA'TZ is necessary, however, as it is unprofitable for the IDF to invest six months' training, plus a month's basic, on somebody who will only fulfil their duty (given the mandatory nine weeks' leave) for one year.

Women showing leadership potential are sent to BA'HA'D 12 for the officer's course. Depending on the job which will be assigned, this lasts between two and five months, and requires the cadet to sign up for an extra six months in the profession-



*A para-jump instructor, c.1980; this MADRICH TZNICHA wears master parachutist's wings (signifying more than 50 jumps) below 'HALO' wings, both with instructor's white backing, and a red instructor's lanyard. Women were once forbidden to make parachute jumps for fear of landing shock causing internal damage, but this has been disproved. Maj. Zuhava Damer-Mizrachi, secretary to former Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eitan, made 72 jumps including 11 into the sea; and today women are regarded as perfect instructors, as most male students make their first jumps with a minimum of fuss under the eye of a female jumpmaster. (IGPO)*

al Army. Many choose to make the Army their career, and advance up the chain of command (though very few make it past captain). Today women officers and NCOs are most prominent in computer fields, intelligence and communications.

#### **Women and combat**

Female military service has been one of the most controversial aspects of the IDF since 1948. Religious opponents argue that for a woman to serve in an army is comparable to the three deeds which one must die rather than commit: prostitution, idol worship and murder. They draw these radical conclusions from ancient teachings forbidding women to wear uniform or bear arms. Religious women are not compelled to serve, although many volunteer for an alternative one-year non-military 'national service' programme.

Conversely, feminists argue that women must be

allowed to make an even greater contribution to national security, and some demand that women serve alongside men in combat units. The reason why this has never been the policy is the greater price which a woman would have to pay for being taken prisoner. (During the first week of fighting in 1948 a PAL'MACH unit defending a water line was overrun and wiped out by Arab irregulars, who took one woman fighter alive. When her body was recovered the appalling evidence of abuse, before and after death, was so traumatic that all women were ordered pulled back out of the fighting line — though the dire military situation warranted their return only days later.) In logical rebuttal the KNESSET member and outspoken feminist Schulamit Aloni argues that men are still sent into combat, although the Syrians castrated IDF soldiers who fell into their hands. Neverthe-

less, women are not allowed near a combat situation. In Lebanon, women serving in the relatively secure rear areas were all withdrawn at nightfall, the time of greatest guerrilla activity.

#### **CHIBA, YAHAS and MORAH HAYELET**

There are two units composed only of women soldiers. CHIBA, the acronym for 'soldiers in police service', is a preventative anti-terrorist unit. Its members patrol the streets, public buildings and markets of major towns on the look-out for unattended parcels, suspicious characters or evidence of terrorist activity. They are unarmed; and in the event of a potential incident their job is to alert the authorities and provide crowd control. YAHAS, the Hebrew word for 'rapport', is an auxiliary nursing unit which, like CHIBA, draws personnel from among girls who have been only marginally accepted for the IDF. They learn nursing skills, and serve in both military and civilian hospitals, benefiting from the chance of a profession while performing useful and fulfilling duties.

Another special female unit is the KADA'TZ course for MORAH HAYELET ('soldier-teacher'). These women serve in development towns and frontier settlements where there is a shortage of educational facilities. They also teach illiterate and newly immigrant soldiers literacy and language skills. They are under direct





An ominously cheerful Military Policewoman on duty, 1985; note black cap with red MP piping, olive-brown 'Class A' sweater (which lacks the cloth reinforcement of the 'woolly pully'), TA'RASH (lance-corporal) rank stripe, and white canvas pistol holster and ammunition clip pouch. (Ofer Karni/IDF Spokesman)

#### Right:

An Education Corps corporal shows off the olive 1980s blouse-and-slacks combination 'Class A' outfit worn by most soldiers on everyday duties. The threat of restrictions to base and stoppage of pay is insufficient to deter many fashion-conscious IDF servicewomen from this kind of strictly non-regulation display of make-up, nail polish and jewelry. (BAMAHANE)



CHEN command, but work in close co-operation with the IDF Education Corps and the government ministries responsible for education and immigrant absorption.

#### Problems

Although CHEN is structured to dictate policy for women in uniform, today's servicewoman faces many problems, from sexual harassment to inadequate self-defence training. The army is where most Israelis meet their future husbands and wives; and in any situation bringing men and women into close contact there is bound to be a sexual potential. In basic training women are instructed in birth control; and although women's quarters are strictly 'off limits', commanders know that this is an impossible rule to enforce, particu-

larly in remote bases and when leaves are few and far between.

Despite the relaxed atmosphere, many HAYELOT have found themselves at the ugly end of sexual harassment, ranging from the hint of reward for favours granted, to violent rape. In the 'macho' atmosphere of the IDF complaints have, in the past, been ignored too often. Today, with women held in greater esteem throughout the Army, complaints of this type are followed up quickly and harshly. Apart from the obvious demands of justice and military efficiency, this is particularly necessary in a small country like Israel, to prevent even harsher punishment being handed out by an aggrieved girl's family or friends. Equally, women who face normal disciplinary

charges have the option of taking their case before a CHEN officer rather than their male unit commander.

Just as serious is the problem of self-defence. Until 1986 most soldiers, low-paid and serving in often distant posts, made their way home on leave by hitch-hiking. A recent string of brutal attacks culminated in the beating, rape, shooting and leaving for dead of one girl hitch-hiker. Men and women soldiers have also been kidnapped by terrorists while hitch-hiking, and cruelly murdered. As a result, women now ride inter-city buses free. It is illegal for them to hitch-hike; and violators are subject to arrest by MPs and the serious charge of 'attempted suicide'. (For perspective, one should add that in the IDF, always

sensitive to the safety of life, a soldier crossing a street against a red light can also find himself on this charge.) The problem underlined the vulnerability of unarmed soldiers not trained in self-defence. CHEN commanders announced that all women would receive issue tear-gas canisters and instruction in the Israeli martial art KRAV MAGA — although this seems so far to have been a promise intended only to appease the media.

\* \* \*

CHEN has come a long way since its inception 40 years ago. New fields of service open up for the woman soldier all the time: in recent developments, women have even become infantry combat instructors, NBC warfare specialists, and 'Hawk' SAM battery commanders. Since her average intelligence and motivation has consistently proved higher than that of her male counterpart, and since the growth of the IDF is paralleled by an increasingly 'technological' battlefield, there seems to be no limit to the future potential of the woman in the Israeli forces.

#### UNIFORM

Combining military uniform with the requirements of fashion has always been a problem for the IDF. For many years women's uniform consisted of coarse khaki issue, civilian items, and occasionally small bits and pieces stolen from quartermasters.

From the 1950s to the mid-1970s women soldiers wore khaki drill on duty; and olive battledress 'Class A' uniforms, identical in material (and, many argued, in allure) to the 'Class A' dress of their male comrades.

Following the 1967 War a revolutionary reform saw the introduction of a mini-skirt cut five inches above the knee, and the relaxation of regulations allowed long hair and modest make-up and jewellery. Women were also issued with comfortable sandals, greatly preferred in the hot climate to the hard,



unfeminine black leather shoes nicknamed 'NA'ALEI GOLDA', after the formidable prime minister of the day. Soldiers were even given extra pay allowances to purchase civilian underclothes; and army bases are open to cosmetics experts who advise on skin and body care. But no matter how fashion-conscious and inventive Israeli women may be, those serving in the IDF must keep their appearance 'modest'. Most disciplinary infractions come under the heading of violations of the dress code!

Women receive three sets of uniform upon induction: two blouse-and-skirt 'Class A' combinations (one dacron for parade dress, one cotton for everyday wear); and a comfortable, lighter-weight blouse-and-slacks combination. They also receive a 'Class A' sweater, a winter parka, and an issue black shoulder-bag which must be carried at all times.

A SAGA'MIT (woman second lieutenant) tank instructor wearing, on her olive Nomex coveralls, green-on-khaki shoulder strap field ranking, green armour instructor's lanyard, and silver armour qualification pin; the helmet is the Type 601.

(Yoni Reif/IDF Spokesman)

Today all women soldiers except those in the Navy and Air Force receive their uniforms in olive colour, replacing the tan-khaki finally phased out in 1982. Those serving in the Air Force receive tan uniforms; and NCOs and officers are provided with a 'ceremony uniform' consisting of a light blue blouse and an Air Force blue-grey skirt. Navy personnel also wear tan-khaki,

and all ranks are additionally issued a white blouse-and-skirt combination. Headgear throughout CHEN consists of a special cap (in Hebrew the terms for the male beret and female cap are the same), which is black for most services; black with green twist piping for the Armoured Corps; with red piping for Military Police; with orange piping for the Engineer Corps; with yellow

twist piping for NA'HA'L units. Parachute units wear the cap in maroon, GOLANI<sup>(1)</sup> units in chestnut brown, and units of the GIVA'ATI Brigade in purple. The IDF/Navy wears the black cap with white piping, the IDF/Air Force a blue-grey cap. Ranks are identical in all three IDF services.

<sup>1</sup>See 'MI' No.5, 'Sayeret Golani, June 1982'.



Above:

The green/black twist piping and the cap badge of the Armoured Corps women's cap. (Author's collection)



(1) PAL'MACHNIKIT sniper, NEGEV Brigade, 1948

Typical of the makeshift appearance of PAL'MACH units, this female fighter operating in the Negev Desert against the Egyptian Army wears as a scarf the kefiyeh which at that time was almost as widely seen among the Jewish settlers as among the Arabs. Odds and ends of ex-British uniform were common; the camouflaged Denison smock, acquired somehow from 6th Airborne Division, was rarer, and much coveted. She wears civilian trousers and shoes, and the US M1923 cartridge belt in one of its variations. A sniper might carry a British Lee Enfield or a Czech Mauser with telescopic sights.

(2) Parachute rigger, 202nd Parachute Brigade, 1968

The standard 'Class A' uniform for women was still, though not for much longer, the olive-khaki battledress blouse and skirt; it is worn with a pale khaki shirt open at the neck, and the hated 'NA'ALEI GOLDA' shoes. The Infantry Branch badge, with red combat-unit backing, is worn on the maroon 'beret' of airborne units. The battledress collars bear small bronze pins in the shape of the IDF crest, on red. On the left pocket flap she wears parachute rigger's 'wings', below the ribbon for the 1967 campaign. The rank of corporal — RABAT — is indicated by two stripes on each upper arm; these seem to have been worn horizontally as often as diagonally, despite their diagonal ends. Note that the 202nd Bde. patch is here sewn to the left shoulder, rather than being worn on a hanging tab.

(3) First Sergeant, NA'HA'L, Golan Heights, 1973

This cool, and even attractive warm season tan-khaki uniform replaced the frumpish battledress 'Class A' from the last years of the 1960s until 1982, when it was replaced in the Army by one of identical cut but olive in colour. The three-pocket blouse/overshirt, worn either with skirt or slacks, has bronze IDF 'sword-and-branch' motif buttons. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, with civilian fashion influencing uniforms, the mini-skirt became regulation (and was greatly appreciated by both female and male personnel). The bronze FALAFEL leaf attached through the sergeant's three stripes identify SAMAL RISHON, first sergeant. The black sandals and shoulder-bag (here personalised with a 'peace' sign) are issue. The NA'HA'L organisation is indicated by the shoulder tab, now worn in the conventional way from the left shoulder strap only, and by yellow twist piping on the black cap, worn with the Infantry badge. Stationed



in a border agricultural settlement, this spirited NCO carries an UZI SMG of early pattern with wooden stock.

(4) Armoured Corps company clerk, Judean Desert, 1981

This PKIDA PLUGATIT (company clerk) accompanies her unit on

manoeuvres during cold weather. She wears the left-fastening female version of the DUBON parka with her rank stripes (SAMAL — sergeant) roughly pinned to the sleeve; the KOVA RAFUL field hat (named after the Chief of Staff, 'Rafal' Eitan, who popularised it) displays the standard yellow Hebrew characters of TZA'HA'L —

the IDF acronym — and the personal affectation of an Armoured Corps qualification pin, normally worn on the left breast. The three leg pockets identify the male-issue olive fatigues which she wears under the parka. The radio is the AN/PRC-25.



**(5) Military Policewoman, Israel-Lebanon border, 1983**

This MP is well turned out for the harsh winter conditions of northern Galilee in the BEGED HOREF winter suit, made popular by soldiers serving in Lebanon's Shouf Mountains; and the HER-MONIT insulated winter boots. The black cap has the red piping and branch badge of the MPs; the patch of IDF Northern Command hangs over the MP brassard worn on the left arm. A typical weapon would be the US CAR-15, issued to women soldiers to replace the UZI.

**(6) IDF/Air Force First Lieutenant, 'ceremony uniform', 1985**

While both male and female Air Force personnel wear a tan-khaki 'Class A' uniform, professional officers and master sergeants also have a second uniform for ceremonies such as Memorial Day and Independence Day parades. For women this is a light blue blouse and knee-length blue-grey skirt, worn with the Air Force blue-grey cap with silver Air Force badge. In this case the badge has red combat-unit backing, since her left shoulder-strap tab is that of Air Defence Forces. The SIKAT ME' MEM officer's qualification pin is worn on the left collar point by all officers of the IDF on all 'Class A' uniforms.

**(7) Master Sergeant weapons instructor, GIVA'ATI Brigade, 1986**

By this date women were serving as instructors with infantry and parachute units. The rank of RAV SAMAL is worn on the forearms — a red cloth disc embroidered with an orange design; with short-sleeved garments it was then worn on a 'watchstrap' on the wrist. Over the olive cotton blouse-and-trousers 'Class A' combination issued from 1982 she wears a 'woolly pully' — popular in many armies, this originally British fashion spread the more quickly in the IDF due to the capture of huge quantities from Arab stocks. The red lanyard of an instructor is attached to the GIVA'ATI Brigade's unit pin, a crocodile and sword motif. The flaming sword pin on the right breast is the OT SHERUT MITZ-VA'IM, marking service for a specified period in an operational area. The most striking feature is the bright purple cap of the GIVA'ATI Brigade; purple berets were issued in 1986 to mark this amphibious infantry formation's elite status.

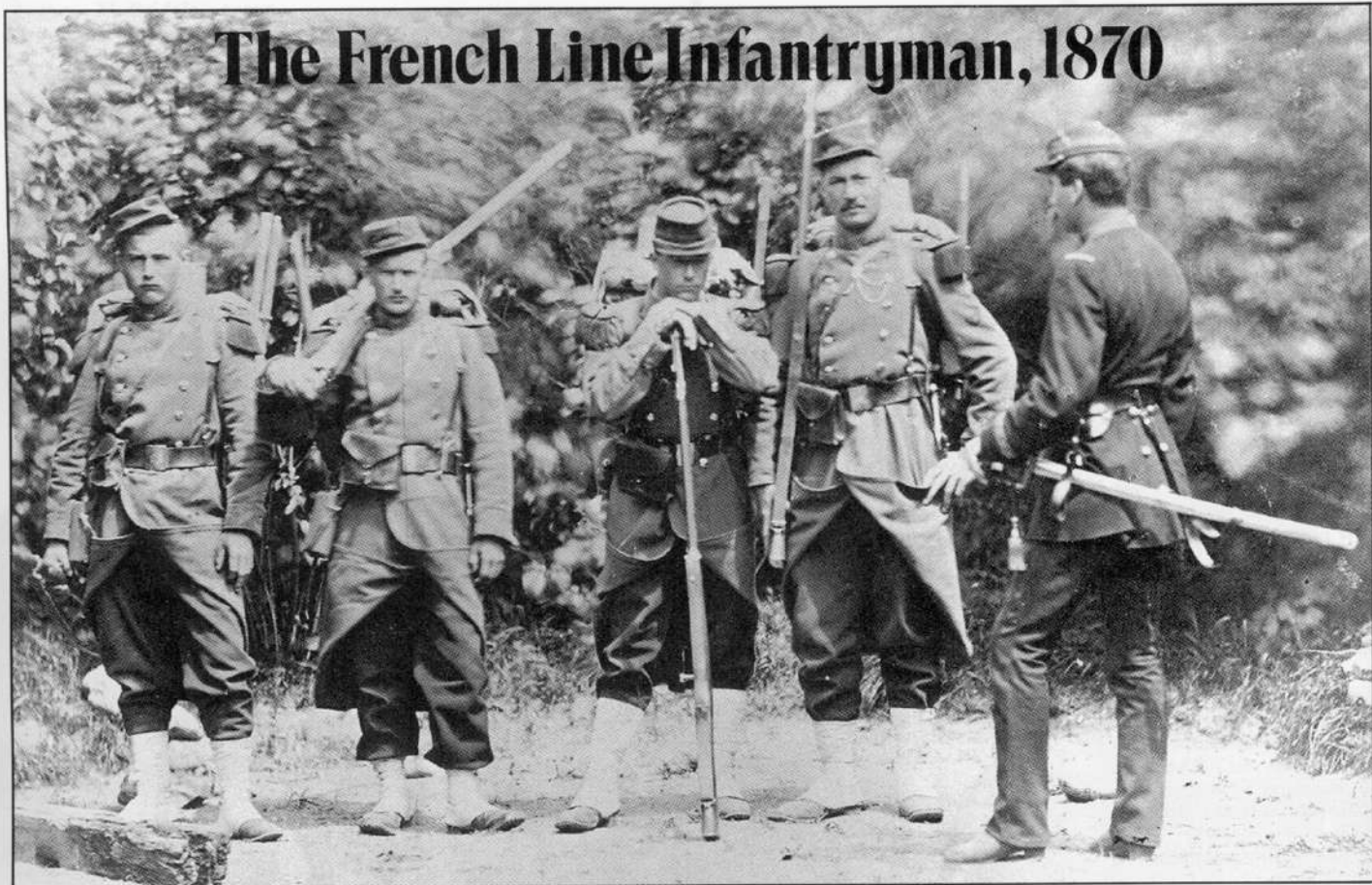
**(8) Officer Cadet, GOLANI Brigade; BA'HAD 12, 1987**

This girl will soon be a KTZINAH (officer), and will proudly discard the white tape covering her collar pin, the white shoulder-strap tapes and the white backing to her cap badge. She wears the unit tab of the women officer's training school on her olive dacron 'Class A' uniform. The brown cap with Intelligence Corps badge indicates an intelligence unit attached to the GOLANI Brigade.





# The French Line Infantryman, 1870



LOUIS DELPÉRIER

The reigns of the Emperors Napoleon I (1804-15) and Napoleon III (1852-70) were both fascinating periods, rich in military triumphs; yet each ended in dramatic defeat. Otherwise, the two reigns had little in common. Napoleon I was finally dragged down by the whole of Europe in arms, after having brought the French Army to a peak of perfection. On 1 September 1870, at Sedan, Napoleon III was forced by the efforts of Prussia alone to exchange the status of emperor for that of captive. Paying the price of its unreadiness, the French Army of his day fell victim to an illusory view of its real capabilities.

## THE ILLUSION OF POWER

As the very popular Gen. Trochu wrote in 1879, the French Army of the Second Empire could boast a spirit which was warlike — but not military... There was bravery and dash aplenty, epitomised by the exploits of such troops as the Zouaves; and the legendary '*furia francese*' was found genuinely impressive by foreign observers. But the truly military virtues, those of disciplined application and organisation,

had been fatally neglected.

In the African campaigns which unfolded from 1830 onwards the disciplined professionalism which governed military developments in Europe was all too quickly laid aside. Among 'the Africans' it became the conventional wisdom that the art of 'muddling through' would suffice on the day of battle. Certainly, in these four decades the French soldier faced a wide diversity of enemies and conditions; and, buoyed up by an impetuous spirit of aggression, he scuffled his way to victory over all his adversaries — Russians in the Crimea (1854-56), Austrians in Italy (1859), Chinese (1860), Mexicans (1862-67), and a host of tribal enemies in various other colonial campaigns. But these were all 'soldiers' victories' — encounters in which eventual success owed more to the human qualities of the junior ranks than to any very notable genius among the senior commanders.

For nearly half a century the French Army was distinguished for its practised

tactical confidence; but this quality was not matched by any mastery of higher strategy. It became fashionable in this period for officers to sneer at any aspect of their calling which was not immediately concerned with actual combat; and this, at a time when the dawn of truly modern warfare was greatly increasing the importance of professional general staffs and commissariat organisations.

This relative disadvantage was sharply underlined by the Prussian victory at Sadowa in 1866. It became evident that any future European war would require a mass army. Yet Napoleon III was never able to impose a system of universal, obligatory military service, which was rejected by his political supporters and adversaries alike. The French Army's effectives were estimated at 750,000 men; yet the number actually mobilised in July 1870 never surpassed 243,000, faced by 600,000 enemy troops.

It must be added that, with the exception of the Imperial Guard, it was not possible to

*This splendid tableau once belonged to the collection of the artist Alphonse de Neuville. It shows a captain (right) and men of the 28<sup>e</sup> de Ligne, probably photographed in 1871 — on the original the regimental number can be seen on the greatcoat collar patches. Apart from this detail, the campaign uniform is exactly that of 1870. Note that the man second from right has a marksmanship award displayed on his greatcoat: two chain loops extend from the central pin to the second greatcoat buttons in a 'butterfly' arrangement. Just visible on his left upper sleeve is the yellow bugle-horn marksman's badge, which reproduces dark on this early film. (Private collection)*



mobilise immediately any large permanent formation. It was only after the almost light-hearted declaration of war on 15 July 1870 that the 'Army of the Rhine' (of seven army corps and the Guard) was created, mobilised and concentrated — in haste, and under the most adverse conditions.

### The Line Infantry

In a sense the French infantryman of 1870 did already serve in a genuinely professional army. The young man who drew a 'bad number' in the draft faced conscription for five years' active service. In each regiment new conscripts and recalled trained reservists served side by side, the latter often being 'replacements' furnished by those who drew a so-called 'good number'.

Since the disbandment of the separate Light Infantry corps in December 1854, the Army had 100 numbered regiments of Line Infantry. Since April 1867 each regiment mustered three battalions, each of eight companies. On 14 July 1870 it was decided to reconstitute a fourth battalion in each regiment, a decision effective from 19 July. These fourth battalions gave birth to a number of *régiments de marche* (composite campaign regiments): 27 were formed before the fall of the Empire on 4 September 1870, and a further 71 during the later 'Republican' phase of hostilities.

Since the days of the First Empire each Line battalion had included two '*compagnies d'élite*' — one each of *voltigeurs* and *grenadiers* — alongside the 'centre' or *fusilier* companies. Their existence no longer justified by tactical doctrines, these companies were disbanded on 22 January 1868. The three alternative titles for an infantry private gave way to the universal term *soldat*.

Each regiment numbered about 2,000 men at full strength. Each company comprised one captain, two lieutenants or *sous-lieutenants*, one sergeant-major, one four-

rier (quartermaster corporal or sergeant), four sergeants, and eight corporals each at the head of a squad of eight to ten men. Each company also had a trumpeter and a drummer, these being commanded at battalion level by a corporal-trumpeter and a corporal-drummer.

### UNIFORM

The uniform of the infantryman in 1870, and for many

years thereafter, was the result of the accumulated experience of African campaigning. The French Army was the first to issue the infantry with a tunic and a waist belt (1845) in place of the uniform coat — *habit* — and cross belts; and this issue was in fact only the official recognition of long-established modifications adopted 'on the ground' by troops in Algeria. It was also

to the Army of Africa that the infantryman owed the habitual wearing of the greatcoat on campaign, and the appearance of the famous *képi*. As for the red trousers, introduced in 1829, these were as much the distinctive sign of the French soldier as were the red jacket among the British, or the spiked helmet among the Prussians. The evolution of weapons had not yet forced the abandonment of any of these features, in a period when the battlefield was still likely to be masked by smoke and it was still important to be able to distinguish friend from foe at a distance.

continued on page 20

#### Left:

A poignant souvenir portrait posed in a studio in Metz by two sergeants fourriers, Bohler and Gasc; each would die in the ranks of the Army of Metz, on 31 August and 8 September respectively. Note the stripes of this rank on lower and upper sleeves; and the capote collars folded down, with two triangles of lapel buttoned back, exposing the bright blue calico stocks tied loosely over the white collarless shirts. (Michel Baudouin collection)

#### Below:

A posed studio group, c.1872: men of the 28<sup>e</sup> de Ligne playing cards. Again, apart from the faintly visible collar patch cyphers the uniform is that of 1870. Note the capote skirts buttoned back, a feature of French campaign, exercise and marching order right up until 1940. (Private collection)







**Left: (and cover illustration):**

Reconstruction of the appearance of a soldier of the Infanterie de Ligne in campaign uniform, August 1870. Fixed in its overall outlines by the campaigns in Algeria, the uniform enjoyed such public popularity that it remained essentially unchanged until 1914:

the red képi and trousers and the 'iron blue-grey' greatcoat were the symbols of the French fantassin for nearly 70 years.

In 1870 many regiments did not in fact receive their full regulation issue campaign equipment, and many soldiers had to take the field without tents, utensils or water canteens.



**Opposite, right:**

The campaign uniform of Sgt. Maj. de Biéville, August 1870: his regiment, the 28<sup>e</sup> de Ligne, was one of the units which disappeared after the defeat at Sedan on 1 September. Part of the value of this interesting surviving uniform lies in the fact that it is the complete outfit of a single soldier of junior rank. Carefully restored, it is now displayed on a dummy in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris.

Infantry NCOs wore the tunic in place of the veste of the rankers; on rare occasions it may have been worn by sergeant-majors on the march or in battle, when their men wore the greatcoat. Note the two gold rank stripes on yellow backing. The canteen strap and the belt plate are both non-regulation. (Collection Musée de l'Armée, Paris)

**Right centre:**

The complete equipment of the infantryman. The 1868 model knapsack carries the rolled tent, with two-part pole (introduced 1858) and pegs; the individual mess tin — gamelle — model 1852, and in this case the squad's grande gamelle. The model 1845 waist belt supports the 1867 bayonet frog, the 1845 model cartridge pouch at centre rear, and the 1867 'cartridge pocket' at front right. The hooks of the knapsack support straps — contre-sanglons — engage with the belt slides. The haversack — musette modèle 1861 — was worn on the left hip, opposite a water canteen: here, the rectangular type with two spouts, introduced in about 1856. The tin cup — quart — was usually carried on the canteen strap. (Private collection)

**Right:**

Model 1866 rifle, 'Chassepot', in as-new condition. This was the French Army's first breech-loader; the basic design was sound, and the 1874 Gras — which remained in service until the appearance of the magazine-loaded 1886 Lebel — was simply a development of the Chassepot to accept metal cartridges. (Private collection)

**Bottom right:**

Shako, 1867 model, of the 59<sup>e</sup> de Ligne. The colour and cypher of the lower part of the pompon identify the 1st Bn., 4th Co. of the regiment. Between 15 and 30 July 1870 the covered shako was the regulation campaign headgear, before its official replacement by the képi at the end of the month. (Private collection)

**Bottom:**

Képi, 1867 model, of the 19<sup>e</sup> de Ligne. From October/November 1870 many examples acquired chin straps, although regulations made no mention of this item. (Private collection)







**Above:**

This infantryman clearly belongs to one of the régiments de marche raised by the Republic after September 1870. Typically, he has folded his coat collar down, and wears no epaulettes. Note also the sergeant's cuff stripe. (Private collection)

**Above right:**

Prisoners of the 56<sup>e</sup> de Ligne, photographed with their Bavarian captors (rear left and right). The centre and right soldiers wear the 1860 tunic, issued instead of the veste to a number of units. The centre man, who has not received a képi, wears instead the 1860 bonnet de police officially withdrawn in 1867; see line illustration. (Private collection)

In general terms, we might add that the French uniform of this period was recognised as a model copied all over the world — a model which would be replaced by a German style after 1871...

The Second Empire saw a number of successive regulations modifying the uniform of Line Infantry. The most recent was that of 2 December 1867.

**The greatcoat**

Since the 1840s the greatcoat — *capote* — had been the infantryman's only upper garment when on campaign, the short *veste* being an item of barracks and working uniform. (An Imperial decision of 16 November 1855 gave official recognition to this practice, which would remain unchanged until 1940.) The general order of 15 July 1870, on the question of campaign uniform, thus conformed to long-established practice.

Like its immediate predecessors, the model 1867

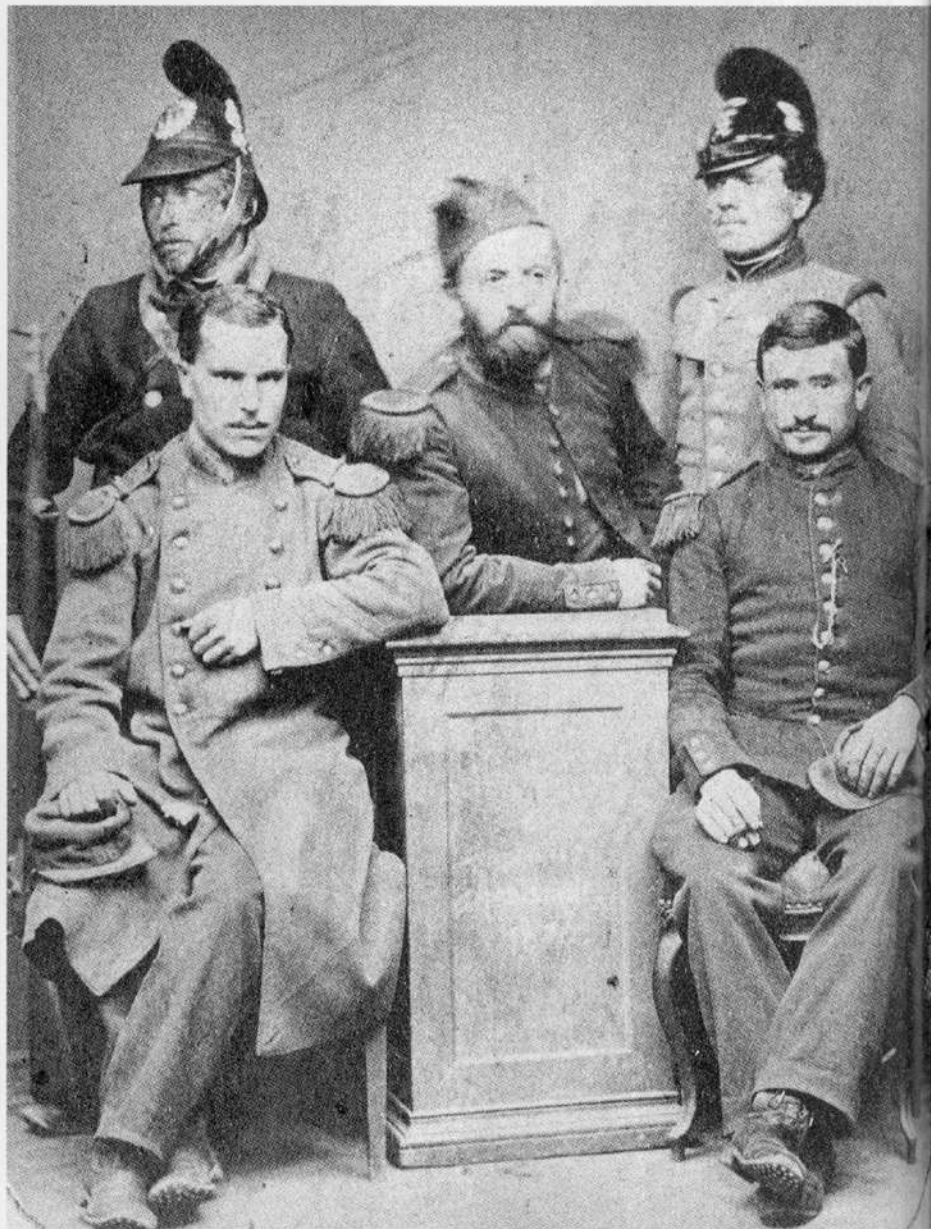
greatcoat was of wool of a shade described as 'the grey of blued iron', woven of 90% blue and 10% white. The rounded stand collar, 45mm high, bore on each side a *garance-rouge* three-pointed patch. Double-breasted, the greatcoat was fastened with two rows of six yellow metal buttons bearing the regimental number. It was adjustable at the waist by means of integral cloth half-belts and buttons at the rear. The differences between the 1867 model and that of 1877, which latter was worn in many cases right up to 1914, may be summarised thus: the 1867 had cuffs closed by two small buttons instead of one; it had a short vent at the rear centre of the hem; and at 45mm, the collar was 5mm higher than that of

the 1877 model. It should be added that from 1871 the buttons were marked with a grenade in place of the number, and the collar patches were ornamented with the regimental number cut out of blue cloth.

The fringed wool epaulettes, in scarlet for all companies since 1868, were worn on the greatcoat even on campaign; they helped protect the shoulders from the drag of the knapsack straps. From October 1870 they were frequently left off, however; and from 1875 they were limited to parade and walking-out dress.

**Insignia**

At the bottom of each sleeve any appropriate rank stripes were sewn obliquely, slanting upwards from front to





back at an angle of 25° to the top edge of the cuff. They were of wool braid for ranks below sergeant; and of gold metallic braid on a backing of yellow cloth (showing as piping along the edges) for *sous-officiers*. The width was 22mm throughout. Ranks were distinguished as follows: *soldat de première classe*, one scarlet stripe (pre-3 April 1868 this had been yellow); *caporal*, two yellow stripes; *caporal fourrier*, two yellow stripes, and one gold, also oblique, on the upper sleeve; *sergent*, one gold stripe; *sergent fourrier*, one gold stripe, and a second on the upper sleeve; *sergent-major*, two gold stripes.

'Old soldiers' were distinguished by *chevrons d'ancienneté* on each upper sleeve, each one awarded at the completion of five years' service, up to a maximum of three. These were in scarlet wool braid for junior ranks, and in gold metallic braid (again, backed with yellow cloth showing along the edges) for *sous-officiers*.

The greatcoats of trumpeters and drummers bore no distinctions. The insignia of *sapeurs* consisted of crossed axes below a grenade, all in yellow cloth, sewn to each upper sleeve.

### The tunic

The *tunique* was worn on campaign only by *sous-officiers*, for whom it served the function of the troops' *veste*. It is thought that the tunic was sometimes worn by sergeant-majors on occasions when the troops were wearing greatcoats, including on the field of battle.

Since 1845 the infantry tunic had been single-breasted, despite frequent recommendations by various inspector-generals that it should be replaced by a double-breasted model, on the grounds of comfort and health in summer and winter alike. The '*habit modèle 1860*' (in fact, a short-skirted tunic) had been particularly criticised; and — though elegant in appearance — had proved itself disastrously unsuitable in Mexico. A new tunic was

introduced by an Imperial decision of 31 May 1867.

Of very dark blue cloth, the tunic was fastened by two rows of seven buttons. The yellow stand collar, 40mm high, was piped in dark blue along the top and front edges. The skirt was 340mm long. The front of the tunic was piped yellow, as were the upwards-buttoning belt loop on the left side, the pocket flaps in the rear of the skirt, the straight upper edges of the cuffs, and the epaulette retaining loops on the shoulders.

### The veste

The *veste* or short stable jacket had been discontinued by an order of 3 November 1860, but was re-introduced on 17 June 1868. Of very dark blue cloth, this single-breasted garment had nine small front buttons. It bore neither collar patches nor loops for epaulettes; the

straight cuffs were not slit at the rear, and bore no buttons.

In July 1870 many regiments had not yet received the *veste*, and were obliged to depart on campaign with the '*habit modèle 1860*' as a working garment; one among these was the 62<sup>e</sup> de Ligne. This 1860 tunic had nine large buttons down the front, and short skirts with a vent at each hip. The rounded stand collar was yellow piped with dark blue; the three-button cuff flaps were also yellow, and yellow piping traced the whole front and bottom edges, the belt and epaulette loops, the top edges of the cuffs and the pocket flaps à la Soubise in the rear skirts.

### The trousers

From 1860 to 1867 the infantry had worn *pantalon mi-bouffant* of 'chasseur' type, confined by gaiters of tan leather. Impressive on parade

and when dazzling the ladies, they were universally reviled on campaign, particularly in Mexico; and the 1867 regulations replaced them with trousers of the classic cut.

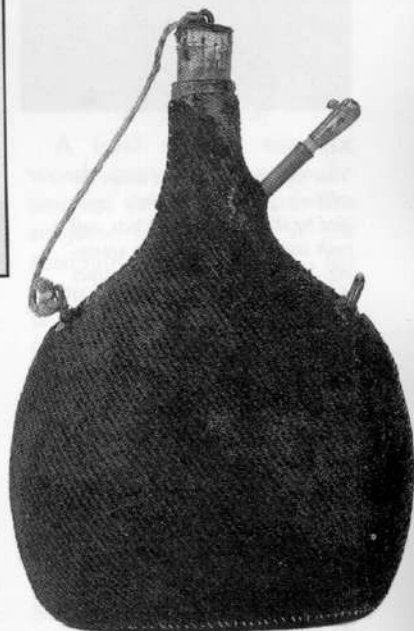
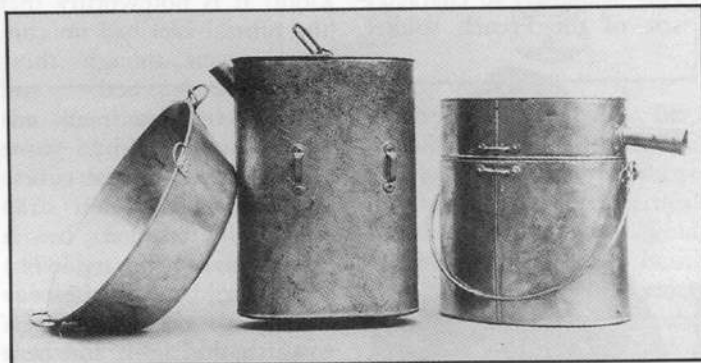
The colour of the trousers was *garance*, a rich madder-red shade obtained from a dye-plant cultivated in the Midi countryside of France until 1882. (After that date the red trousers were coloured with a chemical dye — sold to France by the agents of German chemical companies! Their retention until 1914 was a matter of sentiment rather than sound economics.)

#### Below left:

The collective squad utensils, of which one each was issued, in theory, to every eight men: left to right, the *grande gamelle*, grand bidon and marmite. These items were fixed to the rear face of the knapsack by means of the vertical 1.55m stowage strap.

#### Below:

A canteen of oval section, with a narrow secondary spout; one of a number of different models in service simultaneously in 1870-71, this type appeared in 1865. (Private collection)



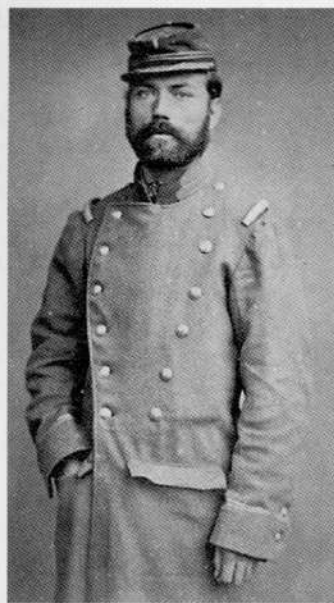
#### Left:

The forward face of the model 1854 knapsack, in a contemporary photograph taken in about 1866 by the manufacturer Alexis Godillot. Note on the left, at the top of the side surface, the small flap covering the access to the compartment for reserve ammunition. By an order of 16 May 1868 this flap became bare leather, and took a rounded form. (Private collection)



## The shako

The model 1867 shako had a felt body covered with *garance* cloth. It was of tapered shape, like all the preceding models since 1843, with a height of 115mm at the front and 155mm at the rear. The dark blue band was 35mm wide. The squared black leather peak was identical to that fitted to the *képi* since the regulation of 12 October 1868, and there was a black leather chin strap. The regimental number, cut out in yellow cloth, was



## Above:

This infantry lieutenant wears the soldier's greatcoat, slightly modified by the addition of pockets, cuff rank stripes, and epaulette retaining brides. The collar patches show to advantage. The practice of officers wearing the common *capote* was widespread after September 1870, and particularly in the 173,000-strong Army of Metz formed under Marshal Bazaine on 12 August — in whose ranks this officer marched into captivity after the disastrous capitulation of 27 October. (Michel Baudouin collection)

## Right:

The *képi* and trousers appear to be the only regulation items worn by Sous-Lt. Vincent of the 92<sup>e</sup> de Ligne in this photograph taken at Metz on 13 September 1870. The paletot field coat or over-jacket is of the same cut as the blue-grey paletot prescribed for officers by an order of 19 July 1870, but is in this case a civilian item. He wears a soft-collared civilian shirt, some kind of embroidered waistcoat, a very broad sash under the coat, and civilian gaiters of thin leather; and carries a non-regulation 1829 horse artillery sabre. (Michel Baudouin collection)

sewn to a dark blue rectangle, itself sewn to the front of the band. The red crown was piped yellow around the bottom, around the sunken top surface, and up the sides and rear. A yellow braid loop secured a tricolour cockade centrally at the front; above this rose a double pompon, the larger upper sphere in scarlet and the smaller lower sphere in battalion colour (respectively dark blue, *garance* and yellow) bearing a brass company number. On campaign and in bad weather the shako was protected by a black oilcloth cover bearing a yellow-painted regimental number.

Despite its discomfort, the shako nevertheless remained the regulation headgear on campaign, as the order of 15 July 1870 confirms. By Imperial decision it was replaced by the *képi* on 30 July.

## The képi

This headgear, so characteristic of the French soldier,



had its origins in the '*casquette d'Afrique*' worn since 1833. Introduced to the metropolitan army in 1843, the '*bonnet de police à visière*' had, from 1852, a *garance*-red crown piped in dark blue and a dark blue band. The squared peak replaced an earlier rounded type in the same year. Replaced in 1860 by a forage cap inspired by that worn by the British Foot Guards in the Crimea, it re-appeared in 1867, when its popularity ensured its rapid re-introduction throughout an army of which it remained one of the most characteristic symbols.

Its dimensions were reduced in comparison with those of the preceding 1858 model: 80mm high at the front, 140mm at the rear. The squared peak was 45mm deep in the centre. In the middle of the dark blue band a sewn-on dark blue rectangle displayed the regimental number cut out in *garance* cloth. It is noteworthy that the official *képi* had no chin strap, even though these were improvised, and attached by two small uniform buttons, by some regiments during the course of the war. (A chin strap would be added by a regulation of February 1874.)

The soldier of the day habitually raked his *képi* towards the right, and bent the peak upwards. Senior officers declared that this gave soldiers 'a guttersnipe air', and by an order of 24 July 1872 the flat squared peak was replaced by a rounded peak inclined downwards at 30°.

## Gaiters and shoes

Each soldier was issued with one pair of white cloth gaiters, and a second pair in black leather for bad weather. The white gaiters averaged 290mm in height, and were fastened down the outside by nine small white bone buttons. From 23 October 1865 the strap passing under the foot was in brown leather. The leather gaiters averaged 225mm in height, and were fastened by a leather lace. The military

shoes, which had remained virtually unchanged since 1841, were of the type known familiarly as '*godilots*', after the name of a famous contractor. The practice of tucking the bottom of the trousers inside the gaiters was another inheritance from the Army of Africa; medical officers considered it ill-advised, and it was discontinued in January 1876.

## Accoutrements

Made in blackened leather since 1848, the belt — *ceinturon modèle 1845* — consisted of a 55mm-wide band, with two yellow metal slides looped to engage with the front support straps of the knapsack, and a plain yellow metal plate clipped at the corners. The sabre-bayonet of the Chassepot rifle was slung on the left hip in a leather frog, adopted on 14 March 1867.

The main cartridge pouch — *giberne modèle 1845*, as modified by order of 6 November 1869 — was worn centrally at the rear of the belt. Each of its two large compartments contained two packets each of nine cartridges. Small tools, accessories and spares for the rifle fitted into the small central compartment and the separate pocket on the front outer face. At the front right of the belt the soldier carried in addition a 'cartridge pocket' with extra ammunition; this could be either the 1867 model, of rounded shape and made of strong blackened cloth, or the model of 27 February 1869, of black leather and rectangular in outline.

The basic equipment was completed by a haversack of white cloth, introduced on 30 April 1861; and a water canteen in white metal covered with old coat-cloth. Of either one- or two-litre capacity, the canteen was either rectangular or rounded in outline — a wide variety of models were in simultaneous use.

The knapsack — the model adopted on 28 April 1854 and lightly modified on 16 May 1868 — was of



cowhide over a wooden former. Vertical support straps passed down from the shoulder straps (secured to them by a large stud at the front of the shoulder) to hook to the belt slides. The knapsack was fitted with three vertical and two horizontal straps, to secure on the outside of the pack the following items: grey wool blanket rolled in a tent-canvas; a two-part tent pole, and pegs; individual mess tin (adopted 24 December 1852); and one or other of the squad's collective utensils — *grande gamelle*, *grand bidon*, or *marmite*.

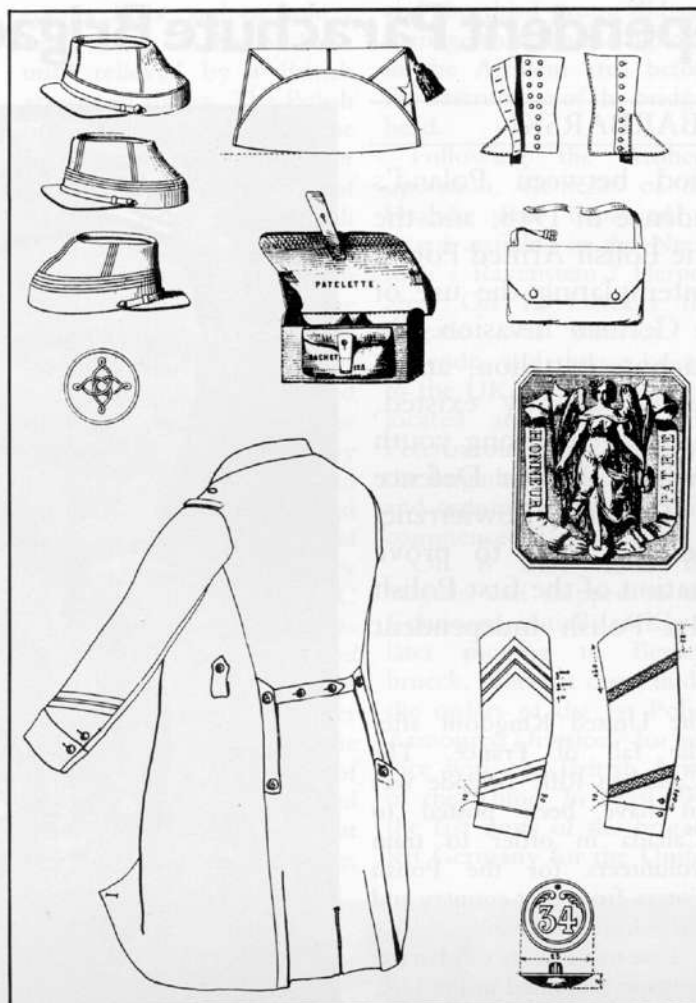
### Weapons

Introduced by an Imperial decision of 30 August 1866, the Chassepot rifle was of 11mm calibre (.43in.), a single-shot, bolt-action breech-loader firing a self-consuming paper and linen cartridge with an integral primer detonated by a long, needle-like firing pin. At the time of its introduction it was the best military rifle in European service. Its introduction made necessary the hasty retraining of many reservists who were unfamiliar with the new system.

The best shots were distinguished by the award of a badge in the form of a small silvered chain terminating in a grenade-shaped pin, worn at the level of the second greatcoat button; and by a bugle-horn badge sewn to the upper left sleeve, in yellow for junior ranks and in gold braid for *sous-officiers*. The Chassepot was carried by ranks up to and including sergeant-major. Warrant officers — *adjudants* — had the weapons, and very nearly the uniform, of *sous-lieutenants*.

### Officers' uniforms

The campaign dress of junior regimental officers in 1870 comprised, in most cases, *képi*, tunic and trousers of very similar appearance to those of the troops. They were more elegantly tailored, and of finer materials. Despite the regulations specifying dark blue, the tunic and



the *képi* band were in fact made of black cloth.

By the order of 15 July 1870 the insignia of rank worn on the tunic on campaign, in the absence of epaulettes, were gold braid stripes around the lower sleeves, the bottom one touching the top edge of the cuff. One, two, three and four stripes distinguished the *sous-lieutenant*, *lieutenant*, *capitaine* and *chef de bataillon* respectively. The *lieutenant-colonel* wore five, of which the second and fourth were silver; the *colonel*, five gold. Gold braid epaulette retaining loops were worn on the shoulders. The tunic skirts, at 375mm, were 35mm longer than those of the troops' version. The trousers, in fine *garance*-red cloth, did not acquire the black side stripe until after 1883.

The *képi*, which did not bear a regimental number on the band, had a gold braid false chin strap. The top surface was decorated with a quatrefoil knot; and around the top of the band were

displayed narrow, flat, metallic braids following in number and in colour those on the tunic cuffs. Vertical lengths of the same gold braid fell from the braid surrounding the top surface to the horizontal rank braids: one for subalterns, two for captains, and three for field ranks, at front and rear centre and on both sides.

The uniform was completed by an overcoat slung crossways round the body: either a field jacket — *caban* or *paletot* — in blue-grey, with two rows of four or five buttons, or even — especially after September 1870 — a soldier's greatcoat. There was a good deal of variation in the matter of officers' overcoats and jackets, particularly in the latter part of the war.

The model 1855 sabre, with a straight blade for senior and a curved blade for junior officers, was supported by two slings from a varnished black leather belt, with a gilt plate bearing a device illustrated elsewhere

### Left:

Top left, uniform regulation drawings of the *képis* of *sous-lieutenant*, *capitaine* and *chef de bataillon*; and the quatrefoil knot of gold braid decorating the top of all officers' *képis* — the braid was doubled for field officers.

Top centre, model 1860 forage cap still worn for lack of *képis* by some men in 1870: red crown, dark blue turn-up band, yellow piping and tassel. The star badge was discontinued from 17 March 1868. Below, opened view of the 1845 cartridge pouch.

Top right, design of the 1867 white cloth gaiters. Below, pattern of the 1861 white cloth haversack.

Centre right, 1845 officer's belt plate design.

Lower right, sleeve insignia positions on (left) a corporal's tunic, with three service chevrons, and (right) the greatcoat of a sergent-fourrier. Below, 1844 uniform button, discontinued 1871.

Lower left, general arrangement sketch of rear of 1867 model greatcoat, with one skirt turned back and fastened to the lower button of the pocket flap.

in this article. The scabbard was steel, the hilt gilded, and the long knot black leather. Around the waist under the sword belt many officers wore sashes of red, blue or green flannel — another fashion copied from the Army of Africa.

\* \* \*  
A final statistic may be worth quoting at the conclusion of any article on this subject, for without it the miserable ordeal of the French infantryman of that war cannot be appreciated. Of the 100 regiments which went on campaign in July 1870, the defeats of August and September literally destroyed no less than 93... Despite all its efforts, the Republican government was obviously unable to make good such a disaster between September and the armistice of January 1871. It was in reaction to this appalling lesson that the French Army achieved a genuine military renaissance — a rebirth which permitted it, 40 years later, to face up to the cataclysm of the First World War. M

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# 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade, 1941-47(I)

KRZYSZTOF BARBARSKI

Despite the brief period between Poland's regaining her independence in 1918, and the outbreak of war in 1939, the Polish Armed Forces were already seriously contemplating the use of airborne forces before the German invasion. By 1939 the nucleus of a parachute battalion, and a training centre at Bydgoszcz, already existed. Parachuting was widely encouraged among youth and other organisations such as the Air Defence League (LOPP — Liga Obrony Powietrznej Panstwa). This experience was later to prove valuable during the organisation of the first Polish airborne formation: the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade.

The brigade could trace its origins to the 4th Cadre Rifle Brigade formed on 23 August 1940 from the cadre of the 'Canadian Rifle Brigade'. This latter had been formed on 9 July 1940 in the Biggar area of Scotland from officers and men of the former 4th Infantry Division who had been evacuated to

the United Kingdom after the fall of France. The Canadian Rifle Brigade was to have been posted to Canada in order to train volunteers for the Polish Forces from that country and the United States.

Due to a change of plan the brigade remained in the UK, taking the title 4th Cadre Rifle Brigade. Initially stationed near Biggar, it was subsequently moved to Eliock. In September 1940 volunteers were sent secretly to undergo training as agents for operations in occupied Poland. On 24 October the brigade took over the defence of a section of coastline near Leven on Largo Bay. During winter 1940/41 brigade commander Col. Stanislaw Sosabowski (who had been with the formation since its days as the 4th Inf. Div. in France) introduced



#### Above:

Col. (later Maj.Gen.) Stanislaw Sosabowski, 'father' of Polish Airborne Forces, photographed in Service Dress at some date between adoption of the second pattern (dark) grey beret in June 1943 and his promotion in June 1944. The beret bears the metal eagle, and the three metal stars and two bars of colonel's rank, the latter repeated on the shoulder straps. The shoulder titles are white on red. The pentagonal grey collar patches, edged yellow at the top, bear embroidered silver parachutes with superimposed silver metal staff officers' eagles. The parachute qualification badge is worn above the medal ribbons, as is the Cross of the Order of Virtuti Militari (5th Class), which according to regulations was always worn as a full decoration.

#### Right:

23 September 1941: a group of men of the 4th Cadre Rifle Brigade in Battledress, with leather flying helmets, preparing for a training jump as part of the demonstrations held before Gen. Sikorski on that date which led to the change of title. Other photographs in this sequence show some of these helmets with the yellow-stencilled eagle badge. Close examination of this print reveals a variety of collar patches and pennons, as worn before introduction of the special Airborne Forces pattern.

ski-ing courses for personnel of the brigade, with equipment loaned by the Norwegians, who had their headquarters at Dumfries.

Towards the end of January 1941 Sosabowski was approached unofficially by the Polish HQ with a view to having members of his brigade undergo parachute training at Ringway near Manchester. It was at this time that the idea of a Polish parachute formation was really conceived.

During spring 1941 work proceeded with enthusiasm. However, Sosabowski found both the basic training and the parachute training methods at Ringway unappealing, and conceived the idea of a Polish Parachute Training Centre, which subsequently came to fruition as the 'Monkey Grove' at Largo House, near Leven. Members of the brigade underwent training here, as well as at Ringway, together with members of special units





who were to be dropped into occupied Europe: over 600 other Allied personnel were to be trained by the Poles at the 'Monkey Grove'.

On 23 September 1941, at Kingscraig, following exercises and demonstrations, the Commander-in-Chief Gen. Wladyslaw Sikorski granted the formation the title of 1st Parachute Brigade (officially approved by Order No. 3219/Tjn.Og.Org./41 dated 9 October 1941). It was originally intended that the brigade should be used in Poland; however, in March 1944 agreement was reached between the British and Polish authorities that the brigade should be used elsewhere — hence its eventual participation in Operation 'Market Garden'.

This article is not the place to attempt an account of the brigade's part in the battle of Arnhem, in which they fought from 21 September 1944, suffering some 500 casualties. (The reader will no doubt be aware of English-language publications dealing with the battle. For the Polish view it is suggested that the reader studies Gen. Sosabowski's memoirs, *Freely I Served*, as well as Marek Swiecicki's *With the Red Devils at Arnhem*.)

In brief terms, the intention was for the British 1st Airborne Division, strengthened by the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade, to capture the northernmost of three bridges over the Rhine far behind

enemy lines, and to hold a bridgehead on the far bank until relieved by a British armoured thrust. The Polish brigade was to land on the south (near)bank of the river and, following the capture of Arnhem Bridge by British units, to cross the river and take up defensive positions in the south-east sector of the town as part of the divisional bridgehead.

The brigade was intended to reach Arnhem in three groups: *1st Group* — by parachute drop (units and services, with light and medium equipment); *2nd Group* — by glider (heavy anti-tank, medical and ASC equipment, with a proportion of the personnel); *3rd Group* — by water (field artillery battery, together with the remainder of the heavy equipment). Lack of adequate glider lift resulted in part of the anti-tank unit being dropped by parachute;

and the third group did not manage to reach the fighting in the Arnhem area before the destruction of the bridgehead.

Following the Arnhem operation, elements of the brigade were deployed to guard airfields in the Neerloon / Ravenstein / Herpen area. On 12 October the brigade was directed to Ostende, and thence by sea to the UK, eventually being located at Stamford near Peterborough. In December the brigade was reorganised, and training of new recruits commenced.

On 8 May 1945 the brigade was shipped to the Continent, initially to Kleve, later moving to Bersenbrueck, where it came under the orders of the 1st Polish Armoured Division<sup>(1)</sup> for service with the British Army of the Rhine. In May 1947 the last units of the brigade left Germany for the United

Kingdom, where on 30 June 1947 it was formally disbanded.

During its almost six years of existence the brigade was commanded by: Col. (later Maj.Gen.) Stanislaw Sosabowski; Lt.Col. Stanislaw Jachnik (from 27 December 1944); Lt.Col. Antoni Rawicz-Szczerbo (from 13 April 1945).

## UNIFORMS

The uniform worn by Polish troops during the period 1940-47 was basically that of the British Army, with the addition of several specifically Polish items. These were: the square-topped *rogatywka* cap; the eagle cap badge; buttons; rank insignia; unit collar insignia; and metal commemorative badges and specialist insignia worn on the tunic pockets, and in

### Below left:

Interestingly, this paratrooper on exercises in Scotland is believed to have been photographed in September 1941 — a remarkably early date for the use of the poorly documented 'Jacket, Parachutists, 1942 Pattern' — the sleeveless olive-khaki oversmock, intended to be worn over other clothing and webbing equipment during the jump only, to prevent snagging of shroud lines. Widely issued to British paratroopers not long before D-Day, this garment would not be the only item which seems to have been issued to the Poles very early — e.g. the helmet with webbing chin straps. (It is intriguing that a recent Belgian reference to kit issued to Free Belgian paratroops refers to the oversmock as the 'blouson polonaise'. An early date for this photograph would be supported by continued use of the French M1935 helmet for motorised troops.

### Left:

A group photographed during the September 1941 exercises, wearing the early sorbo-rubber training jump helmet — one of several patterns tried out by British paratroopers in the mid-war years, before the cylindrical 'rubber bungy' type became standard. They also wear the long-sleeved olive-khaki '1940 Pattern Gabardine Jump Jacket', a very close British copy of the German paratrooper's smock, with short step-in legs. The officer wears his Sam Browne waist belt over the smock. Photos in this sequence show the continued use of the dark blue, yellow-edged infantry collar patches.



<sup>(1)</sup>See 'MI' No.8, 'Polish Armoured Units, UK & NW Europe, 1940-47'.



Leven, 23 September 1942: march-past on the first anniversary of the official formation of the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade. The British general issue helmet is worn, with the sleeveless oversmock; the grey, yellow-edged collar patches with embroidered parachute badges are clearly visible.

#### Right:

Col. Sosabowski (left) with senior officers of his command, in conversation with Maj.Gen. Frederick 'Boy' Browning during one of the British Airborne Forces commander's visits to the brigade. This provides a useful full-length view of Polish parachute officer's Service Dress; insignia are as identified in the portrait photograph of Sosabowski.



some cases above any medal ribbons on the left breast. Among innovations adopted during this period were the 'Poland' shoulder titles; formation signs, worn on the upper left arm; and honorary insignia, worn on the upper right arm.

During the period following the fall of France a mixture of French, British, and in some cases pre-1939 Polish uniform items were worn. Certain items, such as French helmets, remained in service for a number of years. As with the rest of the uniform, the special clothing worn by airborne forces was of British type, including the 'jump jackets', Denison smock, and special Battle-dress trousers.

In general it should be emphasised that all ranks tended to take great care over their appearance. Battledress blouses and trousers were often virtually taken to pieces and retailored to a neat fit; and in the Parachute Brigade there seems to have been strict adherence to a standard pattern of retailoring. The appearance and comfort of NCOs and Other Ranks further improved with the introduction of shirts with collar and tie in February 1945, although NCOs had worn them unofficially for some time before this date.

The Service Dress uniform for officers was the same for all commissioned ranks, with the exception of general officers, whose trousers carried broad dark blue double

stripes with dark blue piping between.

#### Rank insignia

Polish badges of rank were carried on the shoulder straps and front of the headgear as follows:

##### Shoulder straps:

###### General officers

Silver embroidered zig-zag across base, below one to three stars (for all officer ranks the stars extended in a line along the length of the straps). Occasionally an embroidered zig-zag was also worn above the cuffs of Service Dress in the pre-1939 manner.

###### Field officers

Two silver bars across base, below one to three stars.

###### Junior officers

One to three stars.

###### Aspirant officer

A rank adopted in France, 1939/40. Silver stripe along centre of strap; also silver chevron, point uppermost, on headgear.

###### Officer cadet (after training)

NCO rank in silver tape, strap edged with silver piping; also wide silver tape at top of cuff and extending down cuff opening.

###### Officer cadet (OCTU)

NCO rank in NCO tape — silver with amaranth edging both sides — and strap edged with twisted red/white cord.

###### Warrant officer

Strap edged with NCO tape, one star; also red stripe with silver star on headgear.

#### Senior NCOs

Strap edged with NCO tape, one or two chevrons of same.

#### Junior NCOs

One to three transverse bars of NCO tape.

Although ranks were not as a rule displayed on the Denison smock, and certainly not in action, photographs occasionally show this practice by personnel in the UK, and more frequently during post-war service with BAOR.

#### Headgear

Rank as displayed on headgear: NCO ranks were usually embroidered or sewn on to a red background. Initially, ranks were carried on the forage cap (Cap, FS) and beret to the (wearer's) left side of the eagle badge. The generals' zig-zag and the senior officers' double stripes were worn vertically, the stars horizontally. In February 1943 rank insignia were ordered worn beneath the eagle beret badge; zig-zag and senior officers' double stripes were now placed horizontally, with the stars (in a horizontal line, if more than one) above them. Junior NCOs' bars were now to be arranged vertically, contrary to the usual Polish practice.

The traditional *rogatywka* bore, in addition to the eagle and appropriate badges of rank, piping crossing the square top surface diagonally

and continuing down at each corner to meet the top of the cap band. Piping was silver for officers and red for warrant officers; it was not worn by more junior ranks.

Generals had a line of silver piping to the top of the band, and a broad embroidered zig-zag and one to three stars on the band. Senior officers had two silver pipings to the top of the band, and one to three stars on the band; junior officers had one silver piping to the top of the band, and one to three stars on the band. Warrant officers had one red piping to the top of the band, and one silver star on it. The black peak was edged with oxidised white metal for officers and warrant officers alike.

#### Caps and berets

During its period of existence as the Canadian Rifle Brigade, as the 4th Cadre Rifle Brigade and immediately following receipt of its title as 1st Parachute Brigade, the formation wore the uniform and insignia of the Polish infantry.

Headgear consisted of the forage cap with oxidised white metal eagle badge to the front, and the rank on the left side. Officers, especially those stationed permanently in London, Edinburgh or Glasgow, wore the *rogatywka* with a dark blue band — apart from the services, who wore bands of the traditional



pre-1939 colours:  
 Military Police...Scarlet  
 Legal Service...Raspberry  
 (velvet for officers)  
 Pay Corps...Royal blue (velvet for officers with Staff College)  
 Medical Corps...Dark cherry red (velvet for officers)

Chaplains...Violet (velvet)  
 Almost immediately following the creation of the 1st Parachute Brigade various suggested headgear designs — sometimes of a bizarre nature — began to be forwarded to the C-in-C for approval.

On 24 September 1941 Col. Sosabowski wrote to the C-in-C asking for written confirmation of the new name of the brigade; and requesting his approval for a forage cap with a blue top. The enclosed sketches also included one of a black beret

with a blue pompon. Replying on 3 October, Gen. Sikorski confirmed the name but rejected any changes in uniform, appending the observation: 'He who runs before he can walk quickly loses his breath; my dear colonel, there will be ample time for innovations!'

Despite the C-in-C's cool response to this first attempt, further proposals were submitted. On 22 January 1942 a blue, steel grey or khaki beret with a tassel in the centre was suggested; the tassel was to have been made up of 28 strings (the number of shroud lines on a parachute canopy) each 6cm long. This stroke of imagination was, sadly, rejected in its turn...

Finally, Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence No.2, Section 12, dated 28 April 1942 approved the introduction of a grey beret. The shade was described as 'poster grey' — a pale dove grey. The early pattern of beret was, as often as not, made up of separate sections of cloth sewn together rather than being the conventional one-piece felt item.

The eagle badges were to be embroidered on an oval of the beret cloth, in silver wire for officers and warrant officers, and in white thread

continued on page 30



#### Left:

Front and rear studies of parachutists of the brigade parading in full battle order, with folding bicycles and 'Wellbike' collapsible two-stroke motor scooters, during a September 1943 visit by Gen. Kazimierz Sosnkowski, the Polish C-in-C after the death of Gen. Sikorski in July 1943. They wear the definitive steel parachutist's helmet, the Denison smock, Battledress, 1937 webbing including various map cases, and differing marks of Sten gun. The rear view includes (centre) two medical personnel with red cross brassards; the left hand man seems to carry a folded stretcher.

Just visible on the side of the left-hand Wellbike is the Polish national vehicle marking, a black 'PL' on a white oval. The brigade's formation sign, though never displayed on the uniform, was a white stencilled version of the parachutist's qualification badge on a black rectangle.





**Plate 1: Headgear and shoulder insignia.** Top, left to right: metal eagle worn on rogatywka and Cap FS, and from June 1943 on the dark grey beret; issue OR's beret eagle worn until June 1943; and two officers' beret eagles, pre-June 1943, the second of elaborate, non-standard private-purchase form. Below, shoulder titles of 'Other Ranks' and (right) officers' patterns.



**Plate 2: Collar insignia — left to right:** Top row, generals', as worn by Maj.Gen. Sosabowski; infantry, here with staff officer's eagle, as worn before introduction of special parachute forces patch; early 'poster grey' patch, silver wire embroidered badge; early pattern patch, metal badge. Second row, early OR issue patch, white embroidered badge; second pattern dark grey patch, OR issue, white embroidered badge; Military Police patch, metal parachute forces badge; Medical Corps patch, metal badge. Third row, Medical Corps officer's velvet patch, metal badge; early 'poster grey' patch, metal badge, below OCTU insignia; chaplain's patch, added metal badge. Bottom, Legal Service officer's velvet patch, metal badge; Pay Corps officer's patch, velvet for Staff College, metal badge.

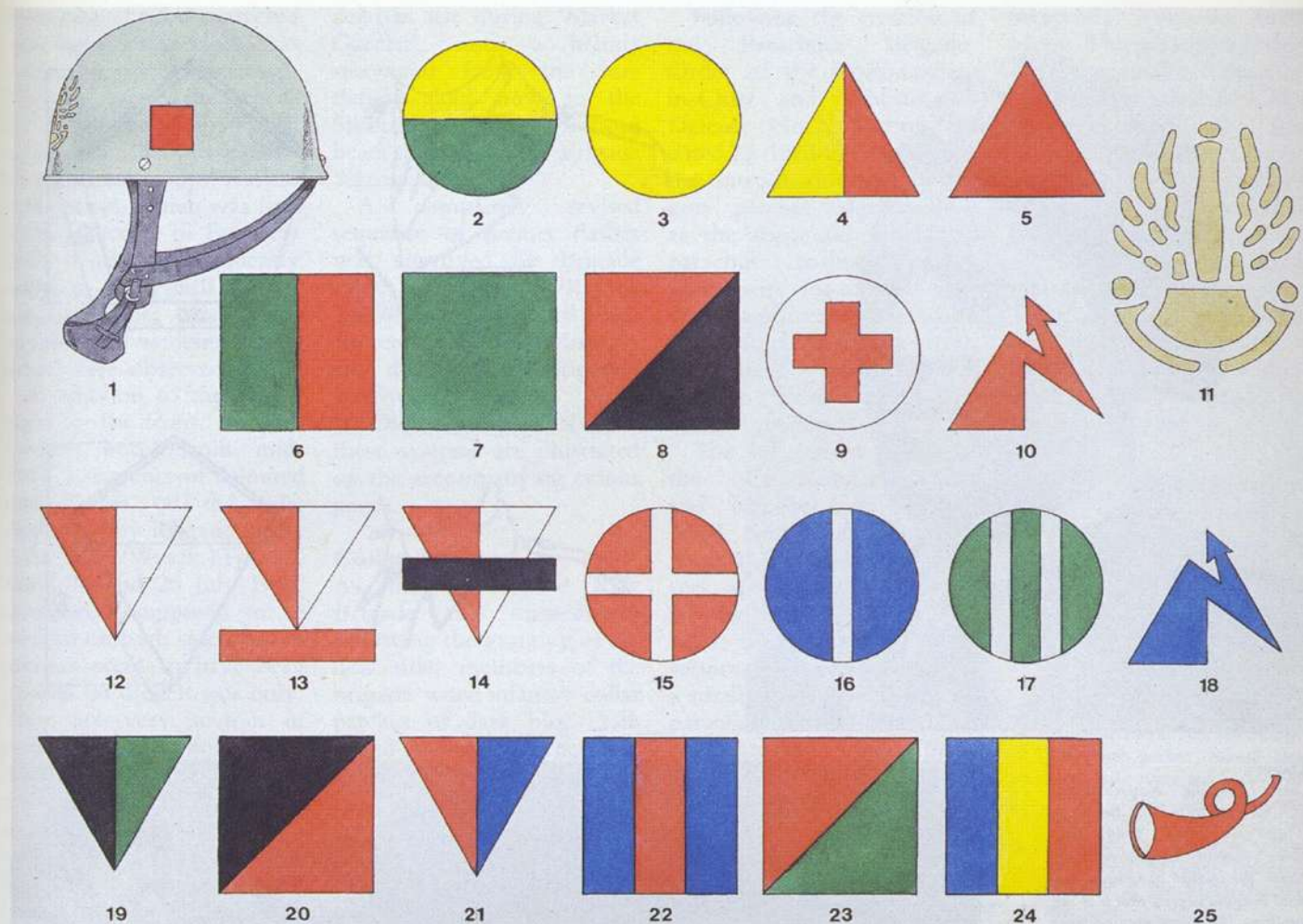
**Plate 3: Helmet flashes.** Under July 1944 system — (2)–(10) — battalions identified by flash shapes; companies within battalions by colour — yellow, red, green respectively. Companies numbered consecutively throughout — 1st to 3rd in 1st Bn., 4th to 6th in 2nd Bn., 7th to 9th in 3rd Bn. (1) Position; all flashes 5cm wide; here, 3rd Bn., 8th Coy. (2) HQ, 1st Bn. (3) 1st Bn., 1st Coy. (4) HQ, 2nd Bn. (5) 2nd Bn., 5th Coy. (6) HQ, 3rd Bn. (7) 3rd Bn., 9th Coy. (8) Para. Eng. Sqn. (9) Para. Med. Coy. (10) Para. Sigs. Coy.

(11) Polish Army stencil, front of all helmets, yellow gas-detecting paint.

(12)–(25), April 1945 system. (12) Bde.HQ; 10 Court Martial; Fld.Security Sect. Personnel of Bde. Provost Marshal wore one-inch red band round helmet base instead of flash. (13) HQ Defence Ptn. (14) HQ Welfare Ptn. (15)–(17): All bn./coy. flashes disc shape; 1st, 2nd, 3rd Bns. identified by red, blue, green respectively; coy. within bn. by one to three white vertical stripes, bn.HQ by white cross. Thus: (15) HQ, 1st Bn. (16) 2nd Bn., 4th Coy. (17) 3rd Bn., 7th Coy.

(18) Abn. Sigs. Coy. (19) Abn. Fld. Arty. Bty. (20) Abn. Eng. Sqn. (21) Abn. A/Tk. Bty. (22) Abn. Fld. Ord. Pk. (23) Abn. ASC Coy. (24) Abn. EME W'kshop & LADS. (25) Bde. Postal Unit. Medical Coy. flash remained unchanged.





**Plate 4: (Left) Service Dress jacket and rogatywka of a captain of 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade.**

Both shoulder straps of the standard British Army SD jacket bear three silver rank stars. Both sleeves bear the 'Poland' shoulder title; and both sides of the collar the early 'poster grey' and yellow patches, pentagonal for this tunic, with embroidered silver parachute badges. The parachute qualification badge is worn above the medal ribbons, and the pre-1939 Infantry Officers' School commemorative badge on the pocket. The cap has the early 'poster grey' band — faded here — with the single piping of junior officers, and the three stars of this rank.

**(Right) Battledress blouse and beret of a lance-sergeant, 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade.**

The blouse has been retailored with open collar, to be worn with a shirt collar and tie, and is well cut and padded for a smart fit. The shoulder straps bear the three transverse lengths of amaranth-edged silver NCO tape, identifying this rank. 'Poland' shoulder titles are worn, as are second-pattern dark grey collar patches with metal parachute badges. The 'combat' parachute qualification badge is worn above the medal ribbons. The second-pattern dark grey beret bears the metal eagle

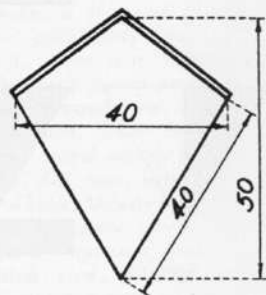
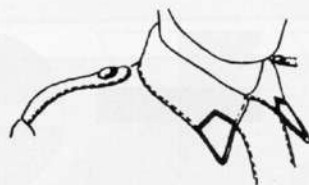
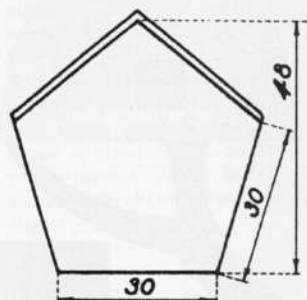
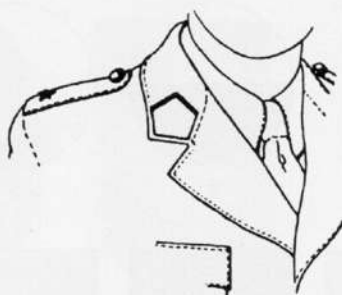
badge and the three bars of this rank, worn vertically from February 1943.







**Above:**  
Capt. Romuald Konarzewski, CO 3rd Parachute Rifle Bn. from 5 June to 4 August 1944. This shows a seamed, multi-piece beret, though the leather sweatband and metal insignia suggest that it is the post-June 1943 dark grey pattern; and the kite-shaped collar patches worn on Battledress and greatcoats.



**Above right:**  
Extracted from Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence No.5 of 27 October 1941, this illustration shows (in millimetres) the dimensions and prescribed method of wearing Polish collar patches. It should be emphasised that in practice the patches — especially those for Battledress and greatcoat — were shaped to fit the actual collar shape.



**Centre right:**  
Four lance-sergeants of the brigade; note triple bars of amaranth-edged silver NCO tape on shoulder straps. All wear the dark grey beret, with metal insignia; the collar patches seem to bear — at least in the case of the left-hand and second from right, and possibly in all cases — the white metal parachute badges. The left-hand NCO also wears the Armoured Forces insignia on his left breast; second from right, the parachute qualification badge; and the right-hand man, the commemorative badge of the Armoured Trains. The latter's lanyard appears to be a plain khaki pistol lanyard; no distinctive coloured lanyard was authorised for this formation.

for Other Ranks. Ranks were to be embroidered in a similar manner, those for Other Ranks on a dark red background.

The light grey berets were in wear when, in mid-1942, an intensive correspondence broke out on the subject of future beret supplies between the brigade, the British War Office and the Polish authorities. Various suggestions were made, including the use of Royal Air Force blue cloth, which was rejected by the Air Ministry. Finally, on 26 June 1943, Gen. Sosabowski introduced a new dark grey beret of conventional pattern, with a black sweatband. The embroidered eagles were now replaced by larger white metal eagles of the type worn on the forage cap and *rogatywka*; the

embroidered rank badges were also replaced by metal equivalents. This pattern of beret was used until the brigade was disbanded in 1947.

The January 1942 proposals also included the suggested introduction of a British Service Dress Cap, with rank insignia as worn on the *rogatywka*, and an eagle of Polish Air Force pattern (embroidered in silver and gold wire for officers and of white metal for Other Ranks). This proposal was rejected; the *rogatywka* was retained, initially with a dove grey band and, from June 1943, with a dark grey one. Officers of services retained their coloured bands. Brigade commander Stanislaw Sosabowski, upon promotion to major-general, wore the generals' *rogatywka* (i.e.

with a khaki band and silver zig-zag and star).

### Protective headgear

During the early period, in common with British airborne forces, the brigade used various patterns of leather flying helmet for practice jumps. On other occasions the French motorised troops' helmet was used, followed by the flat British general issue steel helmet. All carried the stencilled eagle, in yellow gas-detecting paint, which had been introduced in November 1940.

Various later patterns of training helmet were also used; there were at least four different types of foam rubber helmet in use in the UK at this time, but the type with a cloth body surrounded by a thick, cylin-



dricl ring of rubber covered with light khaki cloth was eventually standardised. This, too, carried the stencilled eagle badge in Polish service. The definitive British parachute troops' rimless steel helmet, which was first worn in action in February 1942, was subsequently issued to the Polish formation; examples with both leather and webbing chin-straps were observed.

In addition to the yellow eagle on the front, the steel helmets bore, from mid-1944, a sequence of coloured unit flashes on the side. Approved by Brigade Order L.dz. 1042/Wyszk./Tjn./44, dated 14 and 26 July 1944, these were supposed to be marked on both sides, but in practice seem to have been painted on the left side only. They are very seldom in evidence in photographs taken during the Arnhem operation, due to the netting and scrim camouflage attached to most helmets. However, it appears that helmet markings were in-

deed in use during 'Market Garden', since a helmet recovered from the battlefield (and now in the Sikorski Museum collection) bears the flash of the Brigade Signals Company.

A completely revised sequence of helmet flashes was approved by Brigade HQ Order L.dz.691/Kwat./Tjn./45 dated 24 April 1945, and continued to be displayed during the brigade's post-war service with BAOR. Examples of both these systems are illustrated on the accompanying colour pages.

#### Collar insignia

As the 4th Cadre Rifle Brigade and immediately following the granting of the new title, members of the brigade wore infantry collar patches of dark blue cloth edged yellow at the top. These were kite-shaped for use on Battledress, and pentagonal for use on Service Dress. Staff officers' patches bore a small oxidised white metal eagle.

Following the creation of the Parachute Brigade, Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence No.2, Section 12, dated 23 April 1942 approved the introduction of 'poster grey' patches, edged yellow at the top, and bearing a parachute embroidered in silver wire for officers and warrant officers and in white thread for Other Ranks. (On Battledress, officers frequently wore the Other Ranks' version.)

The subsequent Order of the Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence No.4, Section 27, dated 11 August 1942, allowed officers of services who were serving with the brigade to wear the patches of their services with the addition of a small oxidised white metal parachute. In practice, many of the brigade's other officers adopted the metal parachute on their grey patches in place of the embroidered badge, in some cases even on Service Dress jackets; and eventually Other Ranks would almost

invariably wear the metal badge. The parachute badges were originally manufactured by the Edinburgh firm of Kirkwood & Son, although lead alloy castings were also used in many cases.

Following the order of 26 June 1943, dark grey patches, edged at the top with yellow, replaced the dove grey type. These initially carried the embroidered parachute, but again, in most cases these were eventually replaced by the metal badge.

continued on page 47

*Shortly before taking off for Operation 'Market Garden' in September 1944, members of the brigade's Medical Company prepare their equipment next to a C-47. The left-hand man wears the sleeveless oversmock over his Denison and equipment, and the special Battledress trousers for Airborne Forces with the enlarged left thigh pocket. Second from right, note a rare rear view of the British 'MRC Body Armour', which was available as an 'optional extra' and seems to have been worn by some individual members of the brigade for this operation.*







**Francis Back's reconstructions** illustrate dress and equipment worn from the late 1770s to the early 1790s; see text for basic descriptions:

(1) Grenadier. See relevant illustration of grenadier cap bag decoration elsewhere in article. Note curved hanger; and moustaches, the mark of a grenadier in the 18th-century Spanish infantry. (2) Fusilier company officer. Note silver right-hand epaulette; silvered buttons; and handsome musket accoutrements.

(3) Fusilier company drummer. Livery lace disposition — apart from absence of cuff flap for Louisiana Regt. — is based on 1766 document illustrated elsewhere in article. Long 'rat's tail' queues appear to have been prevailing fashion, and are seen in several colonial illustrations. Drum hoop colours are uncertain: we show blue, but red or red-and-white are also possible. (4) Private, fusilier company. Similar to grenadier, but black tricorn laced white, with red Spanish cockade. Buff belts had square brass buckles. The musket is the brass-furnished Model 1757. For this and all other figures, short black half-gaiters are equally possible.

Francis Back 87



# The Spanish Louisiana Regiment, 1769-1803

RENÉ CHARTRAND  
Paintings by FRANCIS BACK

To many with a casual interest in the War of American Independence, it may come as a surprise to be reminded that from mid-1779 the British Army faced not only American and French, but also Spanish opponents. To those whose prejudices incline them to a dismissive attitude toward Spain's 18th-century garrisons, it may come as a useful corrective to learn of an obscure Spanish colonial unit which could boast an unbroken record of victory in a series of sharp engagements against British regulars, including the formidable 60th Royal Americans.

## SPANISH LOUISIANA

In 1763 France lay defeated by Britain and Prussia. French India was lost; so were Canada and Cape Breton Island. To the south lay the immense but only feebly populated colony of Louisiana. That part of Louisiana which lay east of the Mississippi was ceded to Britain; but most of the territory, the lands on the west bank and the city of New Orleans, went to Spain.

At the eleventh hour King Carlos III of Spain had tried to rescue his fellow Bourbons from disaster, only to see his colonial capitals of Havana and Manila fall to the British. Now, in order to ransom these important centres, he was forced to give up to Britain his colony of Florida. He pressed the French for compensation; and was awarded much of Louisiana.

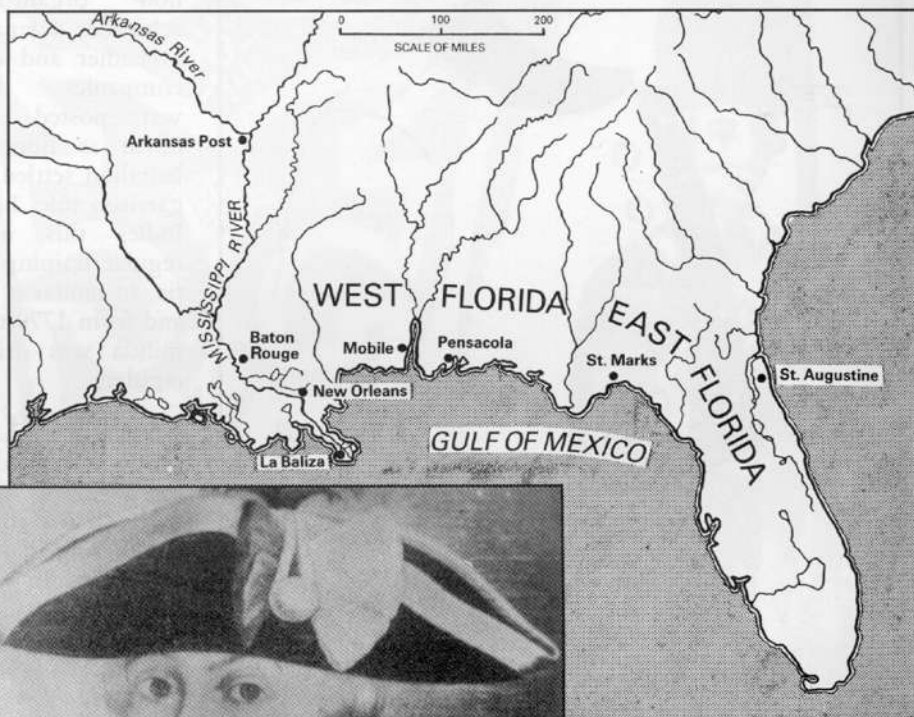
Spain now ruled, at least in name, over an incredibly vast domain. One could leave the southernmost tip of South America and travel north all the way to the upper Mississippi without ever leaving the lands of His Most Catholic Majesty, the King of Spain 'and of the Indies'.

During the 17th century Spain had suffered a serious decline; but with the arrival in 1700 of a Bourbon monarchy there began a slow but sure revival. Reform was

in the air; and the vigorous Carlos III set about a wide-ranging reorganisation of colonial defences from 1763 onwards. Existing regular colonial troops were given improved training, and new units were raised. A unique system of 'disciplined militias', first organised in Cuba, was subsequently introduced to the other colonies. Fortifications were built or up-graded, especially at Havana, whose small 16th-century *castillos* were now dwarfed by the fortress of San Carlos de la Cabaña,

the largest in the Americas.

Havana was the key to the Spanish Main — the assembly point for much of the commercial and military traffic between Spain and its American empire, and the headquarters for military and naval activity in the Gulf of Mexico. Out of its harbour sailed, in 1766, the first Spanish governor of Louisiana, with a small suite of officials and about 80 soldiers. Spain was in no hurry to occupy its new colony: improvements to the strongholds at Havana and

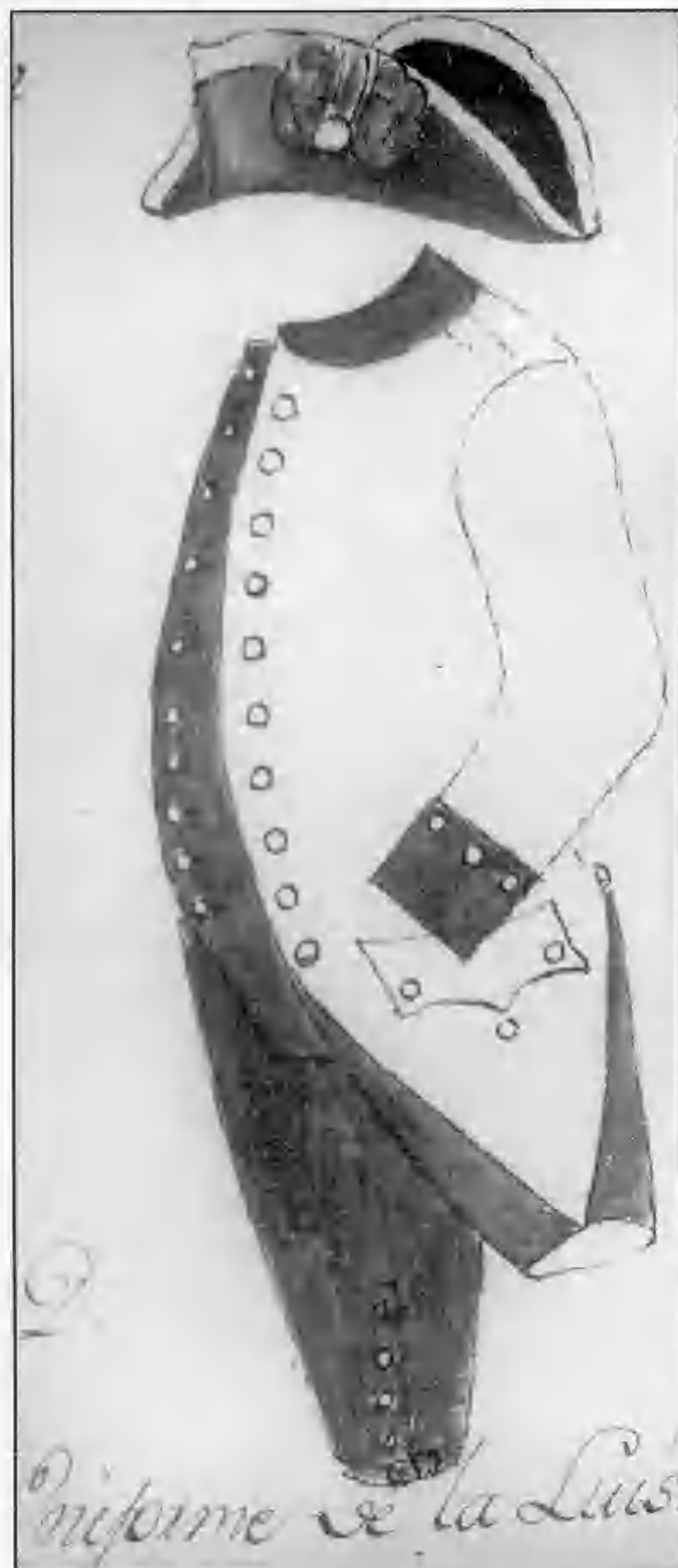


### Left:

Esteban Miro wearing uniform of Louisiana Regt., c.1783. Note 'alliance cockade', on hat: half red for Spain, half white for France. The dark blue rounded collar has narrow white edging. Three silver laces of rank below the silver 'chain' lace of a brigadier's appointment can be seen on the dark blue cuff. Miro came to Louisiana, after service in Spain and Mexico, in 1778 as lieutenant-colonel of the Louisiana Regt., and became colonel on 15 February 1781. This portrait, reproduced in 1904 in Alcée Fortier's *History of Louisiana*, was reported in a French private collection, but its present whereabouts are unknown.



Drawing of the uniform of the Louisiana Regt. enclosed with a letter from Col. Miro to the Marquis of Sonora dated 15 September 1785. Note that the artist has put the buttons on the left for a neater rendition — in fact they were sewn only on the right. Note faint drawing of the white shoulder strap passing under the collar. This hat has the red cockade; it is possible that between 1779 and 1783 the red/white 'alliance' cockade may have been worn. (Archivo General de Indias, Uniformes 54)



Carthagenade Indias took priority.

In November 1768 the local French colonists rose in a bloodless 'revolution', and drove the Spanish governor and his retinue from New Orleans; the small interim garrison of French colonial troops wisely stayed neutral. In August 1769 a Spanish fleet carrying over 2,000 troops from Havana arrived

at New Orleans. The French garrison was relieved; the ringleaders of the revolt were arrested, but otherwise a general amnesty was proclaimed.

Most of these troops soon returned to Havana; but of those who stayed, 213 men of the Aragon and Guadalajara Regiments were 'intended for the formation of a battalion in Louisiana'. They were joined by nearly 200 men from the Lisboa Regiment; and by 100 'foreigners' — apparently former French colonial soldiers and natives of the colony, including 16 cadets from leading local families. By October 1769 the standard Spanish battalion organisation was achieved: a small HQ, one grenadier and eight fusilier companies. Detachments were posted, some as far north as Illinois, and the battalion settled down to its garrison rôle. In the Spanish Indies this included the regular training of the militia, to render it 'disciplined', and from 1770 the Louisiana militia was drilled by the regulars.

#### WAR WITH BRITAIN

Nothing seemed to hint that the Louisiana Battalion was destined for anything more stimulating than these garrison duties. In 1776 a total of 100 men were spread in tiny posts as far afield as Baliza, Bayou St. John, Manchac, Arkansas and Illinois; the other 400 were concentrated at New Orleans. But revolution had broken out in the British colonies on the Atlantic seaboard. When France declared war on Britain in 1778, it was inevitable that Spain would eventually become involved. On 17 July 1779 the news arrived from Havana: Spain and Britain had been at war since 21 June.

The secret despatch which carried the news to Governor Galvez at New Orleans found him already preparing an offensive against British West Florida. Bernardo de Galvez came from a powerful family; his father was viceroys of Mexico, and his

uncle minister of the Indies. A brilliant and active young soldier, Galvez had taken command of the Louisiana Battalion in 1776; from January 1777 he was also acting governor of the colony, a post in which he was confirmed in 1779. Once in Louisiana, his first concern had been to expand the regular establishment: in 1778 he had obtained approval for the raising of a second battalion in what now became the Louisiana Regiment. (By July 1779 he was some 200 men short of establishment for the new battalion.)

#### Baton Rouge

On 27 August 1779 Galvez left New Orleans, leading 500 men of the Louisiana Regiment and supporting militiamen towards Baton Rouge. His force grew to about 1,400 as more militia, and 160 Indians, joined him *en route*. At dawn on 7 September his militia carried the small British fort at Manchac by assault, without loss; one British soldier of the garrison became the first casualty of the campaign.

On 12 September Galvez invested Baton Rouge, the strongest British post on the Mississippi, defended by some 400 regulars of the 16th and 60th Foot, Germans of the 3rd Waldeck Regiment, and some Royal Artillery. A blaze of Spanish musketry, and much ostentatious activity from the Spanish earthworks on one side of the city, attracted a vigorous but ineffective fire from the garrison over several days. It was a feint: on the 21st the Spanish unveiled a strong battery which they had built, undetected, on the other side of the city. The Spanish guns breached the walls, and Lt. Col. Alexander Dickson capitulated the same day. The surrender terms also included the post at Natchez, which was later turned over to 50 men of the Louisiana Regiment.

Meanwhile, King Carlos III had decided that the war aims in America were to drive the British 'from the



Gulf of Mexico and the banks of the Mississippi... and that an attack be made on Mobile and Pensacola...'. In fact the Spanish already controlled 'the banks of the Mississippi' before this important despatch arrived in Havana. The news was so incredible to Gen. John Campbell at Pensacola that he refused to believe the first two messages informing him of the fall of Baton Rouge and Natchez. By this time Galvez was already preparing to invest Mobile.

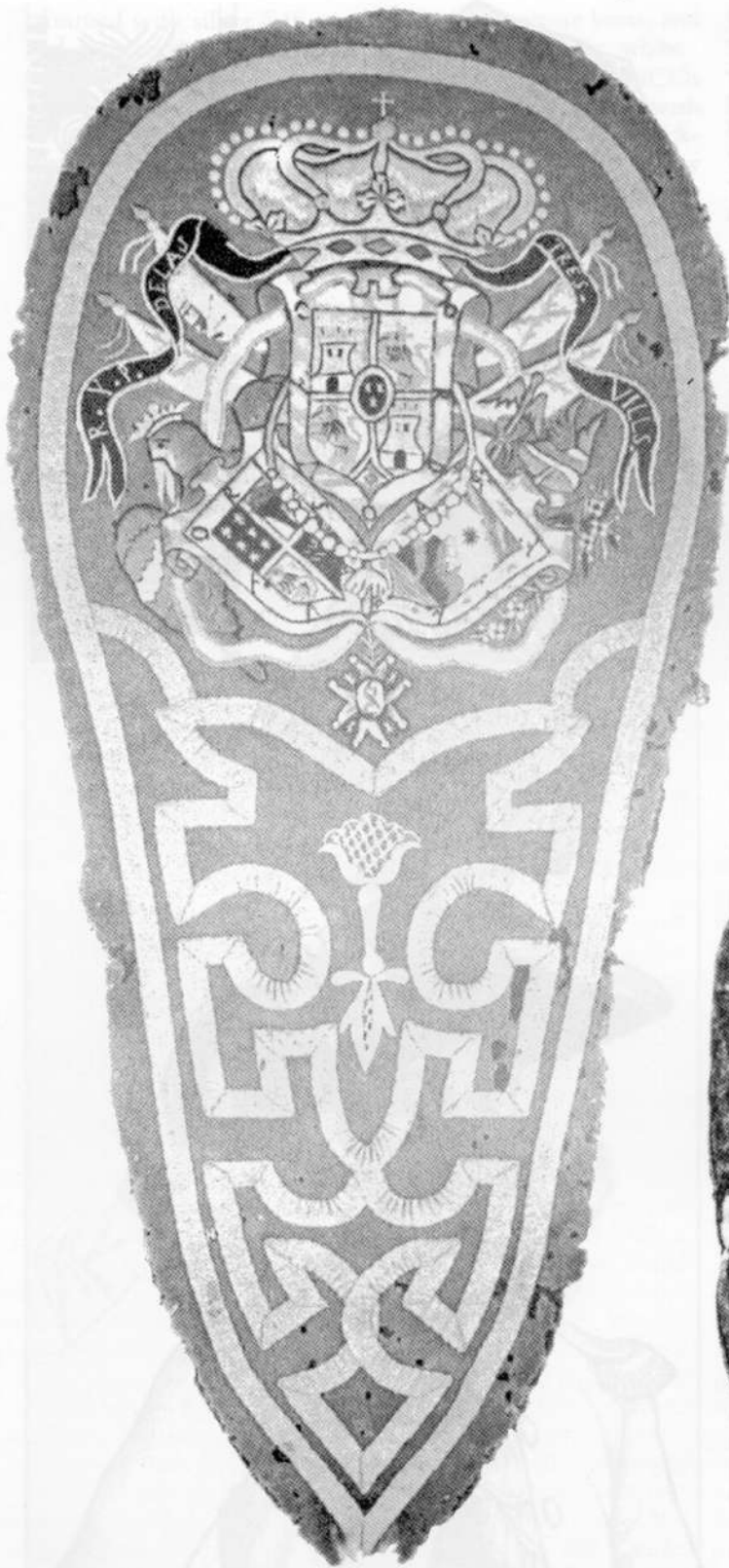
### Mobile

The city had a 300-man garrison from the 60th Foot, Royal Artillery, and Maryland and Pennsylvania Loyalists. By the end of February 1780 they were encircled by a Spanish force of about 750 men, of whom the regular contingent comprised 141 men of the Louisiana Regiment, 50 from the Havana, 43 from the Principe, and 14 gunners. Galvez's demands for reinforcements from Cuba brought the 567-strong Navarra Regiment. By 12 March the Spanish battery was completed, and made several breaches. On the 14th Mobile capitulated; Gen. Campbell, who was leading a British relief column, turned back for Pensacola — the next objective of the energetic Galvez.

### Pensacola

A terrible hurricane ruined campaign plans for 1780; but in early March 1781 a Spanish fleet carrying more than 1,300 men from several metropolitan and Cuban units was sighted off Pensacola. Galvez was in command; and in a daring stroke, he managed to break into the harbour on 16 March. On the 23rd another convoy arrived bearing some 1,400 men from New Orleans: 125 of these were from the Louisiana Regiment, including 53 grenadiers.

Pensacola was a well fortified position, demanding a formal siege. Weeks passed in artillery duels and occasional skirmishes with the 1,200 British defenders.



### Left:

Ornamentation of the 'bag' of a grenadier cap of the period immediately after our subject — Provincial Infantry Regt. of Tres Villas, formed 1796. It is probably the best reference now surviving for the general style of the decoration used by the Louisiana Regt., but requires careful study. The yellow lace on red cloth, and the (missing) yellow tassel at the end of the bag, would have been white on blue for the Louisiana Regt.; and the latter would not have displayed the arms of the three Mexican towns of Cordoba, Orizaba and Jalapa seen below the coloured royal arms on this example. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)



### Right:

Grenadier of the colonial Havana Regt., according to a print published in Madrid, 1775. Note the brass match case, which seems to have passed out of use shortly thereafter. The tall fur cap distinguished the elite company even in the tropics. Detachments of the Havana Regt. first arrived in Louisiana in 1778, and are reported at the sieges of Mobile and

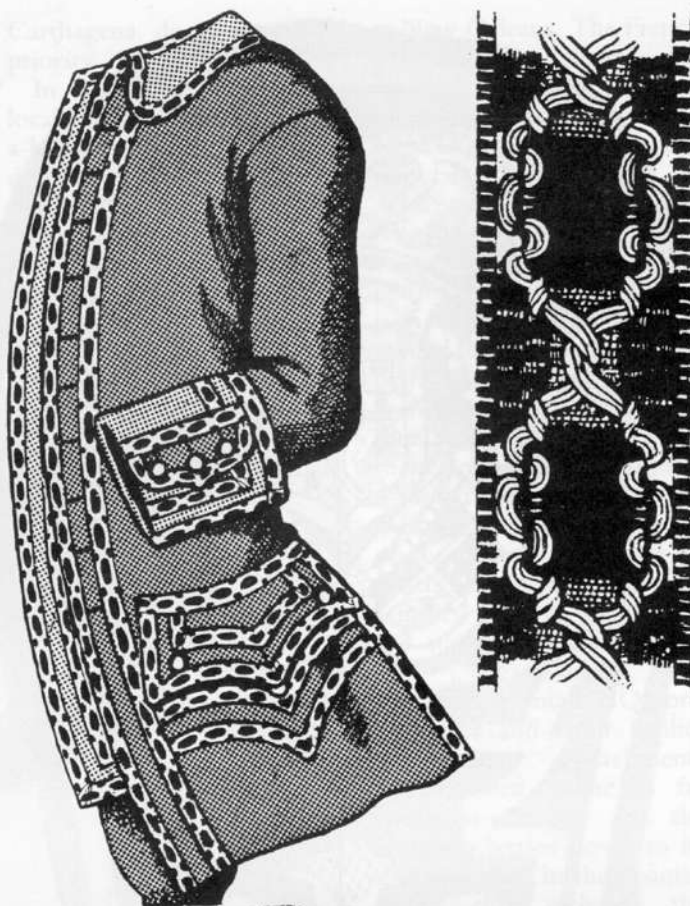
Pensacola. After the war part of the regiment garrisoned Pensacola and St. Augustine until replaced by the 3rd Bns. of the Louisiana and Cuba Regiments. The print shows dark blue coat and breeches with white facings; however, yellow collar, cuffs and waistcoat are reported in the 1780s, and this may be a colourist's error. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)

*Fixo de la  
Havana*



The besiegers received the reinforcement of a further 2,400 men from the Captain-General of Cuba, including 800 French infantry. On 8 May a Spanish howitzer bomb blew up the powder magazine in the Queen's Redoubt, killing 85 men. Spanish infantry quickly moved into the damaged fortification, and this made the British position untenable. Surrender articles were agreed; and West Florida became Spanish once more. The king's instructions had been executed.

There were other minor actions on the Mississippi. A



#### Above:

Drawing by Francis Back after a 1766 watercolour illustrating the uniform of drummers of the Cordoba Militia regiment in Mexico, showing how the Bourbon livery lace was applied to coat and waistcoat in double rows (apparently rather freely — even the top of the coat collar seems to be trimmed). Apart from the blue cuff flap, the drummers of the Louisiana Regt. would have worn a similar uniform — blue coat with red collar, cuffs and lining; red waistcoat; white buttons; blue breeches. (After Archivo General de Indias, Uniformes 86).

#### Above right:

The detail shows the elaborate livery lace, giving the effect of a white chain on a crimson (sometimes red) background. It was usually about an inch wide, although there seem to have been narrower and wider varieties as well. (Drawn by Francis Back from an actual specimen in a private collection.)

#### Right:

Lt. Ignacio de Balderas, New Orleans, c.1790-95: drawing by Francis Back after portrait by J. Salazar, Louisiana State Museum. Only 13 when he joined the Corona Regt. in 1770, he transferred to the Louisiana a year later as a soldier. Reportedly intelligent and zealous, he rose through the ranks and was commissioned a second-lieutenant in February 1781, lieutenant in October 1787, adjutant in 1794 and captain in 1798. Note small silver epaulette of lieutenant's rank on right shoulder; silver-laced hat with red cockade secured by silver loop and button; and high white cravat with long shirt collar — no doubt an attempt to keep up with fashion, which had left behind the stubbornly conservative small, flat coat collar retained by the Louisiana Regiment.



British force of some 750 men was repulsed at St. Louis by 29 soldiers of the Louisiana Regiment and 280 militiamen in May 1780. Loyalists in Natchez staged a successful revolt in May 1781; but by the end of June regulars of the Louisiana Regiment and supporting militiamen were marching back into the town. The fort of Carlos III on the Arkansas was attacked in 1783 by about 140 British 'river pirates', who were repulsed by 40 soldiers of the Louisiana Regiment in what turned out to be the last action of the war in this theatre.

The Treaty of Paris of 1783 granted East and West Florida to Spain. A third battalion of the Louisiana Regiment was organised in 1786 to garrison Pensacola and its dependencies, though the regiment was always a few hundred men short of its establishment of 1,856. After the sale of Louisiana to the United States in 1803 the regiment appears to have become a one-battalion unit stationed in West Florida, mainly at Mobile and Pensacola, until these territories were finally absorbed by the American republic between 1813 and 1821. At this point the Louisiana Regiment passed out of history — an obscure enough unit, which nevertheless managed to win sufficient local successes to shake certain North European and North American prejudices about the Spanish military.

#### UNIFORMS

The basic uniform, said to have been worn at the time of the regiment's formation in 1769, was always described as: white coat, blue collar, cuffs and lining, blue waistcoat and breeches, white metal buttons and white hat lace. Apart from the white 'metal and lace', this was practically identical to the uniform of the French colonial troops whom the regiment replaced, and may be interpreted as a conscious Spanish effort to minimise the psychological effects of



the colony's cession to Spain on the sensitive French inhabitants as well as the Indians. Most Spanish units had breeches of the same colour as their coats, and very few had contrasting coat linings. However, the red hat cockade definitively identified these troops as Spanish.

The 18th-century Spanish army was organised along French lines, and there were some similarities in weapons and dress. Most metropolitan units wore white coats and breeches, with cuffs, collars and waistcoats of facing colours. Foreign regiments and a few others wore blue or red. Colonial units at first usually wore blue, but by the 1760s many had white with blue or red facings, some with fairly unusual trimmings.

**Sergeants** were distinguished by silver hat lace; their uniforms were of somewhat superior quality, and they wore epaulettes of facing colour — i.e. blue, in the Louisiana Regiment. The halberd was their official weapon until 1787, though in practice it seems to have been replaced by a musket and bayonet among troops in the Gulf of Mexico. As early as 1771 no halberds are listed in the arms stores in Havana. Sergeants also wore a steel-hilted sword.

**Corporals** had white lace edging to their coat collars and cuffs; and carried a steel-hilted hanger as well as the musket and bayonet.

**Cadets**, the young men training to be officers, were turned out identically to fusilier privates apart from a silver aiguillette on the right shoulder.

**Fusiliers** wore the white and blue uniform described, made of common quality cloth, with a tricorne hat — although this was certainly closer to a bicorne by 1800. They were armed with muskets and bayonets only.

**Grenadiers** wore a tall fur cap — even in the warmest of climates — with a long, flat 'bag' falling behind. This was of facing colour (i.e. blue), highly decorated and

trimmed with silver (officers and sergeants) or white lace — the button colour — and bore for all ranks an embroidered, coloured crest of the royal arms. Grenadiers carried steel-hilted hangers as well as muskets and bayonets.

The musket was the Model 1757, of .69 calibre (18mm), 1,510mm long overall with a 1,110mm barrel; the bayonet was 483mm long with a 395mm blade. (All measurements vary slightly on surviving examples.) The ramrod was

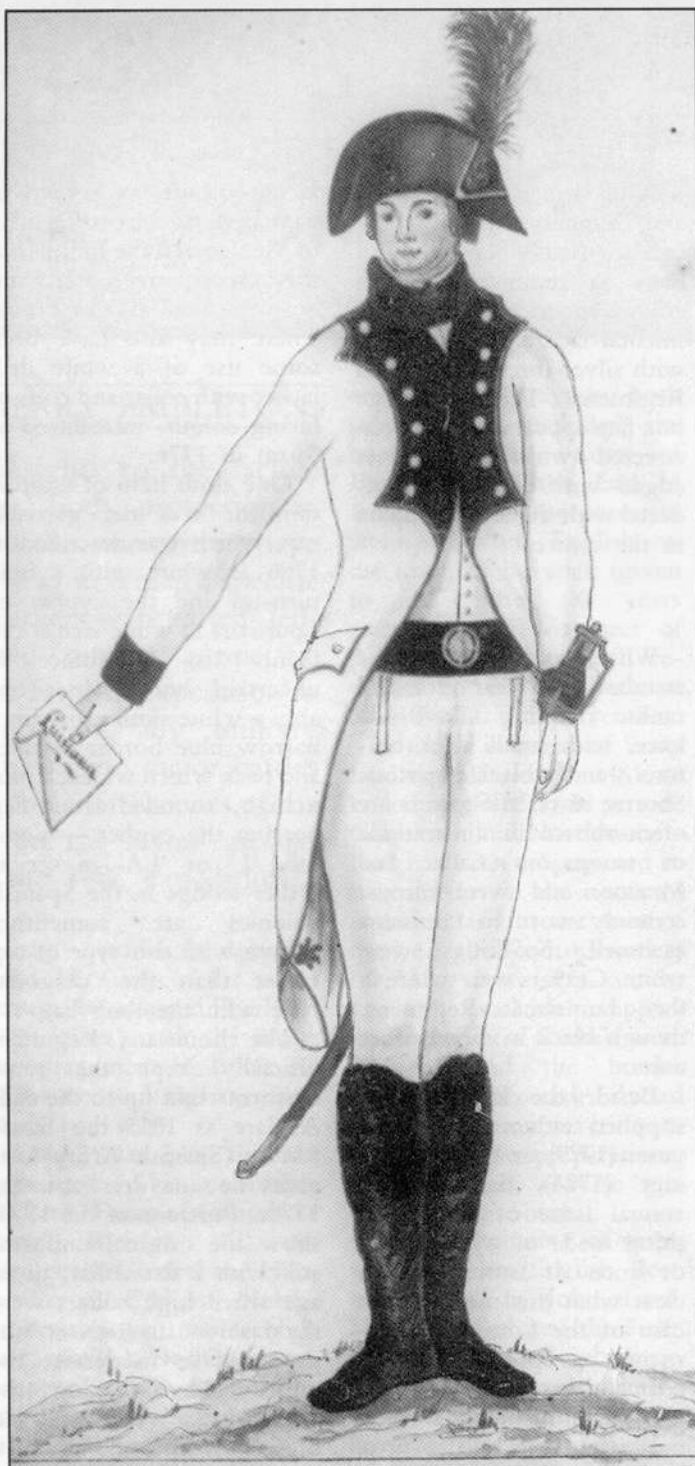
steel, the furniture brass, and the sling buff, later white.

Equipment for all NCOs and privates was of yellowish buff leather with brass buckles; the Spanish army adopted white accoutrements in about 1788, and as worn equipment was replaced this found its way out to the colonies during the 1790s. Until 1775 a waistbelt was worn to support a ventral cartridge box and a bayonet frog; thereafter crossbelts were worn — one for the cartridge box (which was usually black, but sometimes

buff or brown), the other for the bayonet and, where appropriate, the hanger or sword. Cartridge box flaps were plain, if black; or otherwise stamped with the arms of Spain. Those of grenadiers bore a flaming grenade badge in button metal.

Each battalion had a small squad of six **sappers** — pioneers — under a sapper-corporal. They wore the same uniforms and weapons as grenadiers, with the addition of a buff leather apron, and carried an axe or other tool.

Drummers and trumpeters in the Spanish forces received the 'king's livery' by a royal order of 11 March 1760; this excepted foreign regiments, and a few other units belonging to the queen or the princes, which were allowed their colonels' livery. Thus the Louisiana Regiment's **drummers** wore a blue coat with scarlet collar, cuffs and lining and white metal buttons, the coat being trimmed handsomely with the Bourbon royal livery lace of a white chain design on a crimson background. The waistcoat was scarlet and the breeches were blue. Fusilier drummers had the tricorne, while grenadier drummers had the fur cap with blue bag and carried the hanger. The drum was blue, with the royal arms on the front; other details are conjectural — hoops may have been either red or red-and-white. The drum belt was probably blue edged with livery lace. Each battalion HQ had two **fifers**, who wore a similar uniform.



*Watercolour enclosed with an 1804 proposal to change the Louisiana Regt.'s uniform by its commander, Col. Folch. The proposal was coldly dismissed by the Marquis of Someruelos, Captain-General of Cuba; no changes were officially adopted, and this uniform was never worn — though it remains interesting. Bicorne with red plume; white coat and turnbacks, turnback ornament a red grenade(?); dark blue cuffs and lapels; red collar, and piping to lapels, turnbacks and pockets; white waistcoat and breeches; black gaiters. (Archivo General de Indias, Uniformes 55)*



Regimental colour of Louisiana Regt., according to a watercolour of 1786 sent with the order for the colours of the 3rd Bn.: from 1768 to 1802 each Spanish Infantry battalion carried two. There was one colonel's colour per regiment, carried by the senior company of the 1st Bn.: of white taffeta, it bore the full royal arms painted in the centre, often over a red ragged cross, with regimental arms at the corners. The other battalion colours were white with the red ragged cross ('of Burgundy'), with the arms of the regiment — here, those of the Province of Louisiana — as illustrated. The motto *HONOR ET FIDELITAS* painted in gold made this colour distinctive; it is not known if this dated from the raising of the regiment, or was a reward for its excellent service during the War of American Independence. The cords and tassels were silver and red mixed; just below the spearhead finial was tied a red scarf, symbolic of Spain and found on all infantry colours. (Archivo General de Indias, Banderas, 4)



When armed with muskets and bayonets company officers are usually depicted with belts in regimental facing colour ornamented with regimental lace: i.e. blue edged with silver for the Louisiana Regiment. Their cartridge box flap appears to have been covered with blue velvet edged with silver, embroidered with the arms of Spain in the centre.

\* \* \*

White gaiters were the standard legwear for all ranks, reaching above the knee, with small black buttons and black garters. Shorter black half-gaiters are often shown in illustrations of troops in Cuba and Mexico, and were almost certainly worn in Louisiana as well. Stockings were white. Cravats were white in the Louisiana Regiment, though black in many other units.

Besides the cloth uniform, supplied either every three years (1779) or 'when necessary' (1784), there was an annual issue of *lienzo* clothing made of white cotton or linen. It is not entirely clear what this meant in the case of the Louisiana Regiment, but probably waistcoat and breeches. (It might also have included a *lienzo* coat with cuffs and collar of

facing colour, as known to have been used by some units in Mexico and the Indies, but this is speculative.) Shirts and drawers were also of *lienzo*. There may also have been some use of a white drill jacket with collar and cuffs of facing colour, introduced in Spain in 1776.

One cloth item of undress uniform was the garrison cap, which was described in 1786 as white with a blue turn-up and the cypher of Louisiana in white lace at the front. Its appearance is uncertain, but it was probably a white skull cap with a narrow blue border at sides and back which widened into a high, rounded front flap bearing the cypher — possibly 'L' or 'LA' in script. Other troops in the Spanish colonies are sometimes shown with this type of cap rather than the 'dragoon' type with the long bag.

The Louisiana Regiment officially kept the same uniform right up to the end. As late as 1815 the *Estado Militar* (Spanish Army List) gives the same dress as in the 1770s. Portraits of the 1790s show the original uniform, still with a flat collar, in an age when high collars were the fashion. In 1804 it was proposed to modernise the uniform by making the turnbacks, waistcoat and breeches white, and adding a

red standing collar and blue lapels. The Captain-General of Cuba saw no urgency in this matter, and felt that it could be dealt with 'on another occasion'. What was actually worn by this almost forgotten unit while stationed in present-day Florida and Alabama during the very last years of Spain's dominion remains unknown. **M**

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**Manuscripts:** Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Papeles de los Floridatos, Cartas de Galvez Vol. 1, 832 and the original letters of Governor Galvez Vol. 2, No. 304 of 7 July 1779 relates to clothing in particular. Duplicates of much of the above are also in the Archivo General de Indias (Sevilla). Spain: Papeles de Cuba, legajo (bundle or volume) 3860 has a 1784 report of the strength and uniform of the Louisiana regulars and militia, as do 1441 (1792) and 184A (c.1795). The most detailed accounts are papers dating from 1786 to 1788 in Audiencia de Santo Domingo, 2163, which record various requisitions for the equipment of draft battalions of the Louisiana and Havana Regiments. Cuba, 1357 of 20 July 1804 has the proposal for uniform changes. The orders of 15 March 1760 are in Archivo General de Simancas (Spain), Guerra Moderna, legajo 2986. Partial illustrations from the Archivo General de Indias are reproduced here, but many others were studied for comparison, in what must be one of the richest yet least-known sources of colonial uniforms. María Antonia Colomier Albajar's excellent *Costume de los Indios* (Madrid, 1981) is recommended.

**Printed:** Lawrence Edmund 'Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794', *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the year 1944* parts I & II (Washington, 1949) reproduces many of the key documents in English. Jack D.L. Holmes, *Honor and Uplift: the Louisiana Infantry Regiment and the Militia Companies, 1766-1811* (Birmingham, 1965) contains the only work devoted to the subject and is invaluable for abstracts of individual records. Albert W. Harriman, *The Spanish Conquest of East Florida, 1763-81*, *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXIX, Oct. 1980, No. 2, pp. 100-136 and 'The Siege of Pensacola: an order of battle', *ibid.*, XLIV, Jan. 1996, pp. 193-198 are recommended. Uniform data has been published by Francisco Ferrer Lluís & J. Fleiter, 'The Spanish Louisiana Regiment in the Floridas, 1776-81', *Military Collection & Museum*, XVI, No. 3, Fall 1984, pp. 79-84 but drummers are not described in the proper livery. *Ordenanza de S.M. para el regimen... de un escuadrón* (Madrid, 1768) and Comde de Clouard, *Historia Organica de las Armas de Infanteria y Caballeria Espanolas* Vols. 5 & 6 (Madrid, 1854) have useful information on the evolution of the metropolitan army. More recent treatises can be found in José M. Buena's *Soldados de España: el uniforme militar español* (Málaga, 1978) and his *Uniformes militares españoles: mapas, virreyes y otros* (La Nueva España, Yucatan y Louisiana (Málaga, 1983), an essential as well as a colourful and attractive book. Those interested in weapons will wish to consult Sidney B. Brinckerhoff & Pierce A. Chamberlain, *Spanish Military Weapons in Colonial America 1700-1821* (Lanham, 1972) and Juan L. Calvo, *Armamento reglamentario y auxiliar del ejército español* (Barcelona, 1975) — *Book Reviews* 177-180.



## The Medieval Footsoldier 1460–85:

### (4) Body Protection; and Campaign Service



CLIVE BARTLETT & GERRY EMBLETON

To add some human insights to the factual material on footsoldiers' body protection in this final part of our present series, the authors have included some details of the way in which a specific body of late-15th century soldiers were raised, led, equipped, paid and treated during a specific campaign. Our choice of the English expedition to Scotland in 1482 rests not on any military importance — the campaign saw no major battles — but on the availability in the civic records of the City of York of material on the levied archers provided by that city for the 1482 expedition.

#### EVENTS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign originated in the winter of 1479. A treaty of peace had existed between England and Scotland since June 1464, renewed and confirmed in October 1474 when a contract had been entered into for the marriage of the eldest son of James III of Scotland to Cicely, daughter of Edward IV. The contract stipulated that Edward was to pay a dowry by yearly instalments until the children were old enough to

marry — which he duly did until 1479 when, for some reason, he stopped. Early in 1480 James, with the active encouragement of Louis XI of France, took this as reason to declare war.

On 12 May 1480 Edward appointed his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester (later Richard III) as Lieutenant-General and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland became second-in-command. Nothing much happened until September; and even then the campaigning was limited to some

cross-border forays by both sides, which included the burning of the town of Bamburgh by the Earl of Angus, and an unsuccessful attempt by the English on the town of Berwick (given to the Scots 20 years previously by Margaret of Anjou). Gloucester had returned to his residence at Sheriff Hutton by October.

A major invasion of Scotland was planned for 1481, to be led by the king in person; Gloucester and Northumberland had been empowered to raise troops in the northern counties, and at the start of the year the Commissioners of Array were sent out to assess the available manpower. The walls of Carlisle were repaired and the border garrisons reinforced. Edward had to increase taxation to pay for these preparations, which caused 'adverse turmoil' in the South.

At the beginning of summer 1481 an English fleet commanded by John, Lord Howard sailed into the Firth of Forth, captured eight large ships, destroyed many smaller ones and burned Blackheath. But although the

*This picture illustrates a late 15th-century army on the march. Note two-wheeled carts drawn by single horses, and arrangement of three-horse teams for four-wheeled carts. The carters would be hired civilians. In his letter to York of 12 April 1481 King Edward asked the Mayor to '...pourvey for us as many carts for cariages of vitailles' as he could. In his instructions to the Duke of Gloucester and the Earl of Northumberland he mentions, besides his own personal train, that '...provisicion be made for carrie of carts aboute Newcastle...and also other carts to the nombre Vc [500] goying after the host with vitail...'. Numbers such as these should be taken into account when reading bald statements about bad medieval roads, poor communications and lack of organisation. (Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1<sup>er</sup>, Brussels)*

English army had assembled at Newcastle, the king himself never came that far north (either because of ill health or because of the trouble in the South), and the invasion never took place. (Incidentally, the City of York was asked for a 'prest', or loan, by two of the king's officers, Sir Henry Walker and William Kyghley, to relieve a contingent of soldiers 'destitute of money' camped within the City while on their way to Newcastle.)





a b

c

d

These paintings are by the Flemish artist Memling: (a), (b) and (c) from his *Reliquary of St. Ursula* (1489) and (d) dated to 1479. They show in marvellous detail the equipment of ordinary soldiers of the period. Notice the variety of helmets<sup>(1)</sup> and the pieces of armour, and especially the two padded jacks (a,b) and the brigandines (c,d). The left-hand jack (a) shows chain attached by arming points to the sleeves to protect the arms from sword cuts. It has segments cut from the inside of the elbows to ease movement; and the gap in the armpit shows that the sleeve is attached at the top only, for the same reason. (Notice his left hose rolled up.) Cf. the stitched squares of his jack with the vertical stitching of (b) left, whose puffed sleeves are seen in most contemporary illustrations of soldiers' jackets. Notice the quality, and tight-waisted fit. Both jacks are worn over mail shirts, as are the brigandines. (Hansmemling-museum, Bruges; and (d), Institut Royale du Patrimoine Artistique, Brussels)

<sup>(1)</sup>For helmet details see 'MI' No. 11, pp.18-19.

The Scots were also dormant. Early in the year their army had been put on eight days' notice, and by August 40,000 men had apparently assembled at Edinburgh. Although during September there were English reports of

Scottish invasion, there were no encounters. The Scots later claimed that they had dispersed their forces at the behest of the Pope.

By October 1481 Edward had come as far north as Nottingham; but it was probably Gloucester, being the soldier he was, who determined to press on with the invasion. His problems were exacerbated by a bad autumn harvest and a terrible winter leading to severe food shortages in spring 1482; and this, coupled with discontent about taxation, led to serious disturbances throughout the country. However, he re-established the siege of Berwick and, in May, crossed the border and burned Dumfries and other towns.

In June he was called back to a meeting with Edward at Fotheringay Castle to be given the dubious assistance of the Duke of Albany, brother to James III, who had just escaped from Edinburgh castle where he had been incarcerated for plotting against his brother. The two dukes returned north, via

York, and embarked upon their enterprise.

On 30 June the Privy Council granted Gloucester £200 for the transport of his ordinance, and a further £100 to the Master of the Ordinance for 120 draught horses to transport the artillery from Newcastle northwards. Two hundred marks was also given to purchase 2,000 sheaves of arrows. By the end of July Gloucester was at the head of an army of some 20,000 men (including nine surgeons headed by the king's own physician, Master William Hobbes). The town quickly fell, but the castle held out.

Meanwhile the Scottish army, led by James, advanced south. When they reached the town of Lauder events changed dramatically. The Scottish king was seized by discontented magnates and sent to Edinburgh prison, and his favourites were hanged from Lauder bridge.

Gloucester advanced northwards, leaving a force to continue the siege of Ber-

wick; but the Scots withdrew to Haddington, 18 miles east of Edinburgh. Unopposed, Gloucester occupied the capital; and such was the discipline of his army that neither goods nor inhabitants were molested ('leaving that opulent city untouched', lamented one contemporary).

On 2 August the Scots requested terms, and on the 4th a treaty was sealed which included an offer by the Edinburgh authorities to secure the repayment of Cicely's dowry. But the Scots would never accept Albany as king, and he was content to exchange a full pardon and restitution of his property for an oath of allegiance to his brother, although the Earl of Angus was now acting head of government.

Gloucester withdrew to Berwick where, on 12 August on 'Hutton Field beside Berwick', he bestowed knighthoods and rewards on officers and men who had distinguished themselves. He then dispersed most of the army, leaving enough to

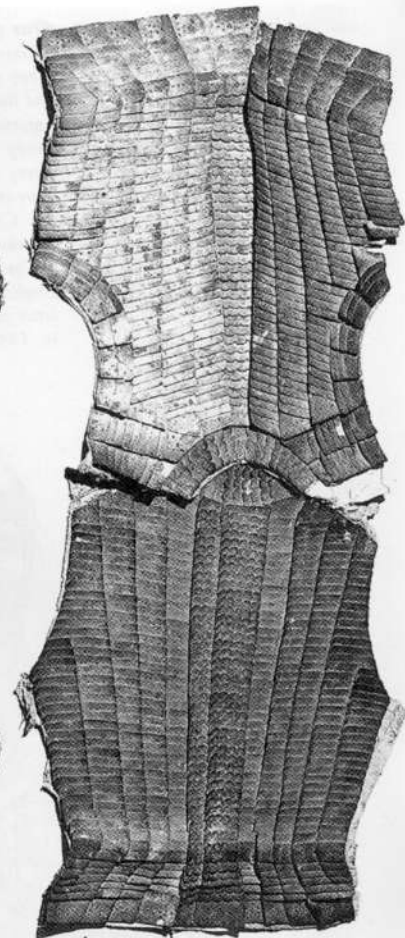




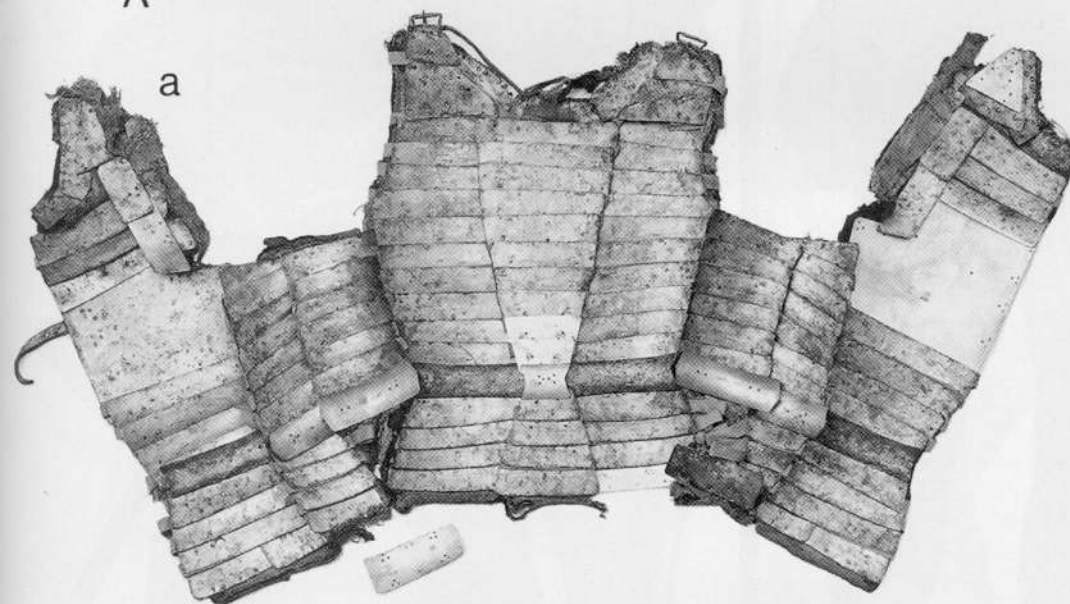
A



B



b



a

These photographs of the front exteriors (A,B) and opened-out interiors (a,b) of two sleeveless brigandines illustrate the two types of construction (B/b) is mid-16th century Italian, and has small plates riveted horizontally. (A/a) dates from c.1470-80, and has fewer, larger plates — including two very large ones — with the rivets in triangles. (B/b) is the classic 15th century type: cf. the Memling paintings reproduced in this article. Compare the two methods of fastening: one central and the other down the left side; both are also fastened at the shoulders. Individual plates could be very thin — many surviving examples as thin as 0.7mm — but they gained strength and resistance through overlapping. No doubt some were made from cut-up pieces of old armour. (A/a Courtesy the Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries)

press on with the siege of the castle, which fell on the 24th. News of this was sent the 335 miles to London via the courier system which had been set up by Edward ‘...to do us service in our messages between us and our brother...’. Though there were a couple of scares towards the end of the year

the war, such as it had been, was over.

Edward claimed it as a great victory; but his only tangible gain was the recapture of Berwick, which, although a personal ambition for years, cost him a great deal of money. The only person really to gain was Louis XI, who enjoyed

nothing better than encouraging prolems for his old adversary at little expense to himself. The ‘war’ can perhaps best be looked at as an extension to the Border troubles endemic since the Percy-Douglas feuds, and which were to cause so much misery throughout the next century.

## THE YORK ARCHERS

The burden of raising the soldiers fell to the annually elected Council which, in York, consisted of the Mayor (a man of considerable social standing), two Sheriffs, 12 Aldermen and 24 other councillors known simply as the ‘Twenty-four’.

continued on page 44



**Our plates** emphasise the English military formation of 'bows and bills'. They show soldiers of the City of York and the Earl of Northumberland, 1482; unfortunately, we do not know the York livery badge (though we do know the livery colours were red and white), so have conjectured here the lion badge from the City's arms. The other badge is Northumberland's crescent moon.

For reasons of clarity we omit here the English national livery jacket<sup>(1)</sup>; but in a letter to Gloucester and Northumberland in 1481 King Edward instructed that

'...every mane that shal go with the Kyng...to have uppon hym a white jaket with a crosse of Seynt George sewed [sewed] theruppon...'. Anyone who so wished was allowed to have also 'his perticuler bagge' on the jacket as long as it did not disguise or deface it. Continuing research suggests that this jacket was actually quite usual in 15th-century English armies, which must often have had a uniform look, at least from a distance.

(A) Levied archer, as described by the contemporary Italian observer Mancini<sup>(2)</sup>, though with a short falchion in place of the sword and buckler noted then. Note the typical bow and large war

arrow of the English, and the arrow bag slung on his back.

(B) This billman is dressed as the archer except for the addition of good-quality leg armour. Notice how the stiff skirt of the jack is cut away, showing the mail shirt beneath.

(C) This officer in the service of Northumberland wears long riding boots; a mail shirt under a substantial fur-lined coat, with a simple waist belt; and a velvet-covered 'kettle hat', slightly the worse for wear, with gold decoration. His fine-quality hand-and-a-half sword has a small knife and sharpening steel in the face of the scabbard; and notice the method of suspension.





(D) This servant to one of the York captains wears a lined hood, and a good-quality brigandine over his coat — we base it on an example in Geneva Museum. Note the purse and the all-purpose knife on his waist belt. The flasks, canteens, gourds and haversacks are taken from various source illustrations of soldiers, travellers and pilgrims. Women are often depicted carrying water containers to refresh troops on the march or before or after battle.

(E) York levied archer in 'marching order', with slung arrow bag and cased bow, his slung helmet replaced by a straw hat. Note the mittens; the poncho-like huke worn on the march;

and the metal livery badge in his hat — doubtless he would also have a material or painted version on his jack.

(F,G,H) Billmen in the service of the Earl of Northumberland. Illustrations show many soldiers with the amount of armour worn by (F), the breastplate sometimes on its own and sometimes with a backplate. No modern researcher has yet solved the problem with this type of half-leg armour, often depicted: it has yet to be suggested how it was attached without slipping down the leg, while leaving the knee joint flexible.

(G) wears his badge on the shoulder of his well-fitted jack. High-necked, puff-shouldered jacks such as this are

clearly shown in contemporary illustrations of archers — almost certainly English — in Charles the Bold's Burgundian army. For the march the waist belt supporting the hand-and-a-half sword is slung over one shoulder. (H) is copied directly from a carefully-drawn figure in the Beauchamp Pageant<sup>(1)</sup>; because of its stiff appearance, the authors assume a type of brigandine consisting of a few large plates held by single rivets. It is worn over a sleeved mail shirt. Note especially the helmet, which is very similar to, and perhaps the precursor of, the so-called 'peaked sallets' of the next century.

<sup>(1)</sup>For details on the whole subject of livery coats and badges, see 'MI' No.7, p.11 et seq.

<sup>(2)</sup>See 'MI' No.1, p.16.

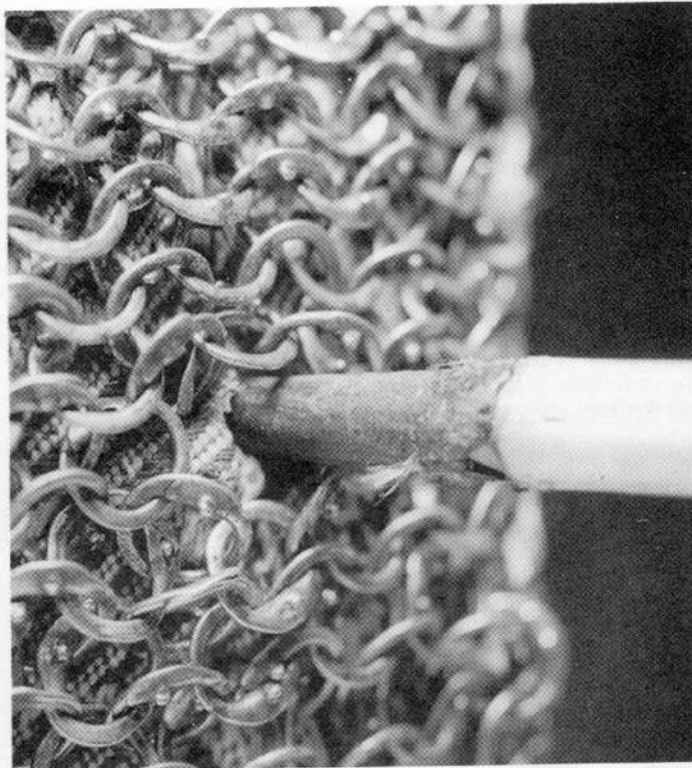
<sup>(3)</sup>See reading list in 'MI' No.11, p.20.





A detailed view of riveted mail, taken during a test conducted by the authors when a scrap of mail (of uncertain date but c.15th/16th century) was attached to a backing made to simulate a padded jack or arming doublet, fixed to a wooden board. It was then subjected to shots with a reconstructed war arrow of  $\frac{3}{8}$ in. diameter with a 15th-century bodkin head, shot indoors at a range of about 30 feet, in order to find out why mail was of limited use as protection against arrows.

The test was, of course, of limited value because of the age of mail and bodkin; nevertheless, the bow used was of about 70lb. draw weight, and the results allow speculation about the effects which could be achieved if a true English war bow of some 90-120lb. were used. In the test the arrow pierced the mail every time by splitting apart the riveted join. Interestingly, when the arrow missed the mail and hit only the padding it sometimes bounced off. In the picture the bodkin has penetrated to a depth of about 2ins. and has stuck in the wooden plank. (Ian Ashdown)



There was also the Recorder. In military matters the Council had to answer not only to the king, but to the Duke of Gloucester and the Earl of Northumberland as, respectively, commander and second-in-command, and also because of their positions as Wardens of the Border Marches. York exchanged correspondence with all three regarding the raising and number of the City's soldiers.

We do not know for how many soldiers the City had been assessed, but in a letter of 12 April 1481 the king stated that '...in consideration ye be not of such riches as ye have been in tyme past...', he was content with their offer of a captain and 120 archers. He added a request that the '...said costs and charges be not laid uppon every pour comoner, bot uppon said citezins within our said Cite as may easelie bere the same...'. However, although the same figure was put forward for the campaign in 1482, on 14 July, just as the levies were leaving, the City successfully petitioned Gloucester to accept the reduced contribution of 100 archers because of the '...poverty of thys pure

Cite...' (due, perhaps, in some part to the expense of continually raising and standing down soldiers during the on/off campaigning of 1480-2).

It must be remembered that these soldiers did not represent the sum total of available manpower, but only those paid for by the City, and further troops could be raised at the king's expense. In a letter of 2 July 1482 the Earl of Northumberland asks the Council how many men the City can find '...to take the Kyngs wags, besid such persones as the said Cite hath graunted at this tyme...'; and it seems that in May Gloucester paid for 80 'wele arraied and horsed' men.

### Levyng

Of the original 120 archers, 80 were to be of the City and 40 from the district of Ainsty, which for some reason was historically under the jurisdiction, and now constituted part, of the City. It is not known what ratio either part supplied for the reduced figure. These levied archers were raised by the procedure of the local landowners and other wealthy persons 'finding' (i.e. sponsoring) men.

The Council members

were foremost in this, and a minute of the 14 May meeting gives a list of sponsors, e.g.: '...Thomas Neylson has granted to fynd ii men. Item, John Tonge, lieutenant, have graunted two men. Item, Thomas Wrangwish two men...' and '...Item, Michael White a man. Item, John Hag a man...'. In fact, it was agreed that '...Aldermen that fayle to fynd ii men, and wich of the xxiiii that fayle to find i man, shall pay to the use of the chambyr Xli [£10, a considerable sum] to be raysid of thar lands, gudes, and catell without pardon'.

We know from the records that the archers who eventually left the city in July 1482 were led by two captains, both members of, and elected by, the Council: John Brackenbury and Thomas Davyson, who each had a servant, and were accompanied by a standard bearer and a friar. They also had at least one but probably two carts, as two carters are recorded. We also know that, following usual English military practice, while they would fight on foot, like later dragoons they travelled mounted. The men had been inspected by the City wardens at the end of June to ensure they '...be wele and

defensable arraied...' and we can assume that, as for the campaign in the year before, '...the stander, javelien, harnesse, jakks...' were supplied and paid for by the Council.

### Payment

The archers were to be paid at the usual set rate of 6d per day ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  new pence) for 28 days (an extra allowance was given for their horses, either owned or hired — see below); and in the light of the way soldiers and their finances were treated in following centuries, it is worth looking at the York example in a little detail.

The wages and day-to-day expenses were paid through a tax raised in all the parishes under the City's jurisdiction. The constable in every parish would collect the money that had been assessed on his parish and deliver it to the wardens. The wardens in turn delivered it to the Mayor, who turned it over to the captains. If any of the money was '...not fully spendit, accordyng to the rate of the days...', or if the campaign was called off, the chain was followed in reverse and the remainder returned to the parishes.

It had been decreed that the archers would have 14 days' money in advance, the remaining half to be kept by the captains and paid out at their discretion. In an interesting early example of soldiers' strike action, on the very morning of departure three of the men — John Brompton, John Gillmyr and William Lent — refused to budge unless they were given the full amount in advance. Taking their lead from this example, all the other archers followed suit. At such a late stage the authorities had no choice but to agree, and the money was 'duly handed over. It must have burned a hole in the soldiers' pouches, because by 5 August, about three weeks later, a further tax had to be raised from the parishes and sent to the York contingent in Scotland, where they were reported to be 'descelet of money'.



Some examples (not to scale) of the vast number of utensils, tools etc. to be found in a 15th-century camp. Given the enormous and often under-estimated trade in all goods, and the extent to which soldiers travelled, it is not surprising that the same basic forms occur throughout Europe. (There were also regional variations, but space forbids addressing the subject in such detail.) While it is hoped this small selection may be of interest to illustrators, modellers and general readers, the main intention is to impress the idea that, pro rata, the logistics of supplying a 15th-century army would have at least equalled those of the 18th or early 19th century. From left to right in all cases:

(A) All kinds and sizes of tubs and buckets were used for all kinds of purposes: bathing; transporting and preparing food and drink; even as wine coolers. Handles might be of wood, rope or metal; bindings were more often of wooden lath, withy or other fibrous materials than of metal strapping. Baskets were little different from those of today, and used for the same purposes — though to a much greater extent, and often of larger size, carried as illustrated.

Spring shears came in all sizes, for cutting fabrics or hair. Small wooden, bone or horn combs were common, as were small eating- or all-purpose knives. The small brush, which according to one illustration may have been used for washing, is shown with a rare illustrated example of a 15th-century razor — which may possibly have had a folding blade, though the source is unclear.

(B) The commonest shape for bread, seen here with a cheese, seems to have been a simple round loaf, often cut into 'fingers' at formal meals. The smoked sausage, sometimes seen hanging on a pole above a chimney, is still common today in any European butcher's shop.

Elaborate plans were made to supply the Scottish expeditions; the king ordered 'vital' to be made ready in every town along the line of advance, and 'vitalers' to be appointed to serve the army by land and water, the suppliers to be 'well and truly paid'. Flour supplies and bread-baking requirements are also detailed, as is the need for carts to carry food.

At formal meals food was often served on flat discs or rectangles of wood or pewter; the 'trencher' of bread was probably placed on these rather than directly on the table. Jugs of pottery and bowls, beakers, cups and spoons (often extremely fine) of wood, horn or metal

were common. Though shapes were usually simple, decoration was by no means uncommon: before the days of mass production craftsmen and owners, no matter how poor, thought it normal to personalise handmade items.

(C) Many kinds of chests, the larger ones also serving as seats, are shown in illustrations; they were sensible and obvious luggage for men, of any degree, who could arrange for a bit of cart-space. Triangular-topped chests are often shown in Swiss sources as artillery ammunition boxes. Smaller wooden jars and boxes are frequently seen, for ointments and medicines, spices, jewellery, sewing materials, etc.

We show here candles, a simple candlestick and candle holder, and two

types of flint-striker, the upper one of the shape adopted by Charles the Bold as his badge. Lanterns, oil lamps, rush tapers, and even splinters of resinous wood held in very simple metal clamps were all used for lighting. Lamps and lanterns were sometimes held in a gimbal on a long pole resting on a support or bipod.

See colour plates for gourds and canteens; but here, next to a common canteen shape, is a roped peasant water jar from a late 15th-century print.

(D) A selection of baggage and sacks. Barrels, often rather narrow and long, up to the size of the very large 'tun', were used to carry everything from rations to armour (packed in straw) and

arrows; most were held together by non-metallic bands. Notice the 'cock' for tapping the barrel, a commonly illustrated feature: it would be interesting to know whether the design came from the name, or vice versa.

The wooden spade had only the (replaceable) cutting edge of metal; axes, of whatever size, were straight-hafted, and usually variations on these two basic shapes. Among the cooking equipment, the grills are often associated in illustrations with long-handled frying pans; cauldrons might be hung over the fire, or stood on their own legs. Soldiers are sometimes depicted carrying cauldrons and canteens slung on the shafts of pole weapons.





## The reckoning

On 29 August, after the men had returned to York, the three malcontents were dragged before the Mayor and Council to explain their behaviour. Brompton, the apparent ringleader, declared that he had not acted with the encouragement of anyone else, but simply because he had originally been led to understand that they would receive the full month's money in advance and had consequently gone out and 'bought him geyr to go with' (presumably he meant all those little extras-to-issue that all soldiers, down to the present day, like to take on campaign). This had left him penniless so that '...with out he had the said weghis he myght not go...'. On questioning, it turned out Gillmyn and Lent had followed him out of simple bloody-mindedness and not real

mischief. The three of them were put into Kytton prison to await the Council's pleasure.

In the event they were treated extremely leniently. Before the Council on 7 September three men — William Lettwyn, Thomas Boyn and John Stokysley — vouched for them; and after they had apologised to the Mayor and Council for their behaviour they were bound over in surety to the king for 100 marks (1 mark = approx. 67 new pence, so 100 = approx. £67 — several years' wages. The threat of such a fine was doubtless effective.) One wonders how they would have fared before an 18th-century court martial.

On 13 October the two captains, Brackenbury and Davyson, were called before the Council to present the accounts of wages and expenses (having been granted an extension of four days from the original decreed date). Four of the councillors were then appointed to audit these accounts in detail and reported on the 23rd. They granted Brackenbury an expense allowance of 20d a day, Davyson 18d a day, and their servants 8d a day each, for 17 days. They were further allowed 2 shillings a day for 25 days for the friar's and carters' food and drink. Twopence a day was granted towards the cost of the soldiers' horses, but only for 14 days whereas the carters

were allowed the same rate for 25 days. It was also decided that if any of the horses had died during the campaign (it is not recorded if any did) the cost was to be recompensed by whatever parish the rider came from. Finally, it was decreed that the standard bearer should receive 12d from each of the parishes.

There was still some money left over, however; and, instead of being returned to the parishes, at the 'instance of the ryght nobill prince, my lord of Gloucester' this was given on 20 December to Brackenbury and Davyson 'in reward for thar deligent service' — though with a caution that this was not to be taken as a precedent.

Finally, note should be taken of one John Lam, hauled before the Mayor and Council on 30 December on the report of a certain Henry Ancok, and asked to explain a statement he had made to the effect that the York archers had been 'ill worthi to have thar waghys' because all they had done was to have 'made whypys of thar bowstryngs to dryve [the] cariage with'. Lam denied this, claiming he had only said that he had overheard some of the soldiers state they had done 'nothing els bot waitid upon the ordnauns and cariage', and one archer comment that he had been so weary that he had taken off 'the stryng of hys bow to

dryve hys horse with'. No punishment for Lam is recorded: presumably he was sent away with the flea still buzzing in his ear.

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*Richard III* by Paul Murray Kendall (Allen & Unwin, 1955)

## Acknowledgements

The authors have made extensive use of reconstructions during the course of the research which formed the basis of these articles. Reconstructions are looked upon with disdain by most academic historians; but, given the scarcity of detailed written references and surviving examples over such an interval of time, we remain convinced that this type of research is the only way to find practical answers to many questions. What is it like, for example, to wear and move in hose? To shoot a handgun? To wear armour in summer heat or winter snow? We now have some idea of the answers to these and many other questions; and we actively encourage and participate in such reconstructions — provided that they are attempted with proper care. The computer adage 'GIGO' naturally applies: 'garbage in, garbage out' — if the reconstructions are wrong, the answers are wrong.

We take this opportunity to thank publicly those people without whom our reconstructions would not have been possible:

Firstly, our thanks to Caroline Thorpe, who made practically all the clothing featured in these articles, and who had to work out — often from sketchy information taken from faint pictorial sources — the use of different fabrics and the methods of construction.

To Nigel Clough, for making all the armour.

To Chris Boyton, for making all the bows, swords, knives and scabbards.

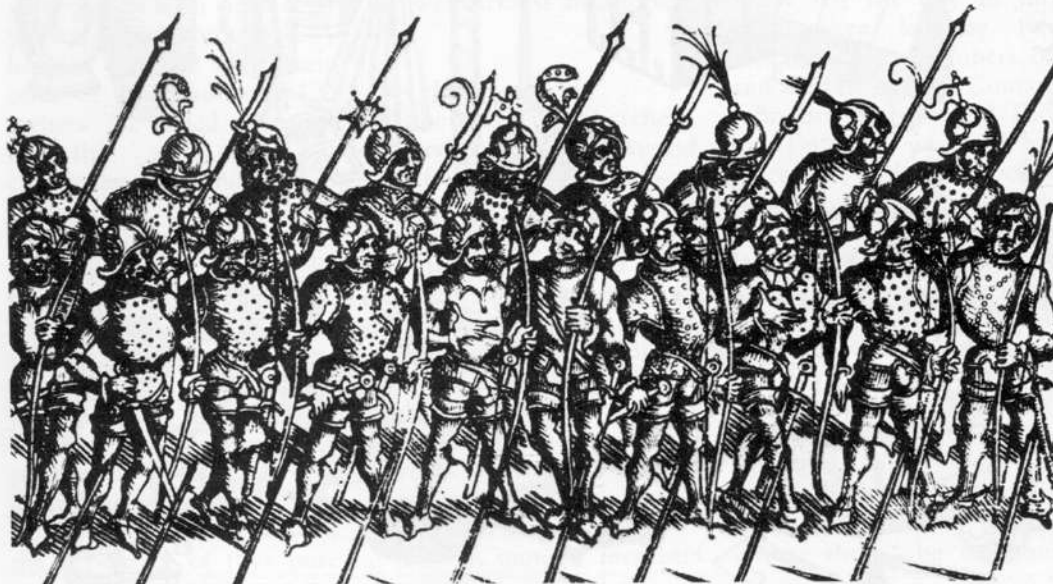
To John Jenkinson, for making all the shoes and purses.

Finally, to Ian Ashdown, armourer, and his assistant Renato Pacozzi, for help in practically everything.

Far more material has come out of this programme of reconstruction than we have been able to illustrate in this series of articles, with its limited remit; we hope to present further examples in the fullness of time.

MI

This illustration of 1475, though Burgundian, shows the classic 15th-century English formation of archers backed by billmen: e.g. an eyewitness account of Henry VII's march to Stoke Field in 1487 states that when the army halted '...the Kyng sett his folk in array of batell, that is to say, a bow and a bill at his bak...'. This formation was adopted by the Burgundian army. The stakes were optional; use was often made of hedges and natural or man-made ditches — even, on occasion, of vineyards. Notice the long riding boots of the archers, showing that they travelled on horseback. The small pennants on the sallets (centre and right rear) are Burgundian insignia of rank. (Private collection, photograph Château de Grandson)





POLISH PARA BRIGADE

continued from p.31

As mentioned, officers of services retained patches in the traditional colours:

Military Police ..... Scarlet, edged yellow  
Legal Service ..... Raspberry, edged black (velvet for officers)

Pay Corps ..... Royal blue, edged carmine (velvet for officers with Staff College)  
Medical Corps...Dark cherry red edged dark blue (velvet for officers)

Chaplains ..... Violet (velvet) with silver embroidered or white metal cross. In the Parachute Brigade the metal parachute badge was frequently worn beneath the cross.<sup>(1)</sup>

The parachute badge on the collar patches posed a problem for staff officers, who officially wore the eagle badge on their patches. The solution adopted appears to have been to wear the eagle below the parachute, some-



times slightly overlapping it; the parachute itself sometimes overlapped the top edge of the patch.

In the Polish Army generals formed a separate corps and wore identical insignia whatever their original branch of service. However, on promotion to major-general Sosabowski seems to have worn the generals' dark blue velvet patches, edged

carmine at the top, with both eagle and parachute badges. In some photographs, however, Gen. Sosabowski is seen apparently still wearing the brigade's grey/yellow patches instead of the generals' pattern — especially on his Battledress uniforms.

The problem of collar insignia for officer cadets on OCTU courses was solved in a similar way. The

Bersenbrueck, Germany, 23 September 1945: parading on the brigade's fourth anniversary, these paratroopers display the scheme of helmet flashes approved in April 1945 — in this case the HQ of one of the Parachute Rifle Battalions. One also has the flash marked, to half size, on the butt of his Sten, in the correct manner for brigade personal equipment. The yellow eagle was still displayed on the front of the helmets at this date.

pre-1939 officers' school collar badges ('SPR' in a wreath, with a star at the bottom) were worn above the patches with the parachute badge.

**To be continued:** Part 2 will detail and illustrate 'jump wings' and various other rare insignia, both original and reproduction; the colours and pennants carried by the brigade; and the insignia of the secret, parachute-trained behind-the-lines unit, the Independent Grenadier Company. Sources for both articles will be listed with the second part. **MI**

<sup>(1)</sup>At least one, Chaplain Hubert Misiuda of the 3rd Bn., wore the violet patch with cross on the right collar, and the grey/yellow patch with parachute on the left.

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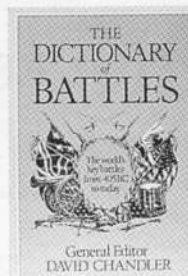
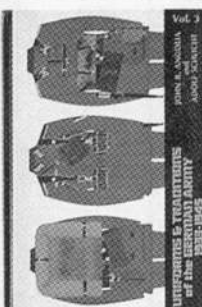
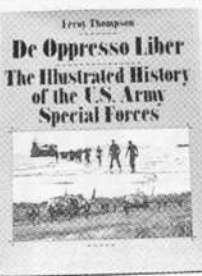
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# Colonel Fred Burnaby

MICHAEL BARTHORP  
Paintings by PIERRE TURNER

**R**emember Colonel Burnaby at sandy Abu Klea! — so ran a once-popular soldiers' song. But who now remembers Fred Burnaby: one of the most famous, popular, yet in some circles notorious figures of the Victorian British Army?

Though a man of many parts, he was foremost a soldier, an officer of one of the oldest and most select regiments of the British Army — The Royal Horse Guards (The Blues). As part of the Household Cavalry, the regiment numbered several aristocrats and many rich men among its officers. Compared with these, Burnaby came from a relatively humble background, being born on 3 March 1842 the son of a fox-hunting Bedfordshire parson-squire and his wife, the daughter of a Norfolk landowner. There must, however, have been some money in the family; for, after an education at Harrow and elsewhere undistinguished except for signs of talent for languages and prowess at sport, he was purchased a cornetcy in the Blues dated 30 September 1859. Promotions to lieutenant and captain, also by purchase, followed in 1861 and 1866.

With his great height and powerful build, Burnaby soon attracted notice by his horsemanship, his skill with sword and firearms, and his prowess as athlete, boxer,

gymnast, and even balloonist — he crossed the Channel by this means in 1882. His muscular frame was topped by a sallow, almost Levantine complexion, with blue jowls and a moustache described as a 'thicket fence'; somewhat oddly, a thin, piercing voice emerged from this striking countenance. Despite his great muscular strength Burnaby suffered constantly from a liver complaint, and later from bronchial and heart trouble.

## TRAVELS WITH PEN AND REVOLVER

The life of a Household Cavalry officer in the 1870s was an unvarying round of London duties and aristocratic social occasions, leaving much to be desired for a man of Burnaby's calibre. Fortunately leave was plentiful, and afforded opportunities for more adventurous pursuits. He was fluent in three languages and nearly so in

four more, while his powers of observation and description were sufficient to provide him with an auxiliary career as a journalist and travel writer. In 1874 he got himself accredited as correspondent to *The Times* to cover, first, the civil war in Spain between Carlists and Republicans; and second, the anti-slavery measures of Gen. Charles Gordon in the Sudan during that officer's first tour of duty there as the Egyptian Khedive's Governor of the Equatorial Province.

The following year Burnaby made an epic 800-mile journey across the steppes of Central Asia in midwinter. (An engraving from *The True Blue* shows him with a special suit guaranteed by a Regent St. firm to withstand the cold, a blue pilot jacket lined with astrakhan, furlined boots, a service revolver, and a 12-bore shotgun.) This dangerous expedition not only provided much useful insight into Russian activities in that area — always considered a threat to British India — but also the raw material for his first book: *Ride to Khiva* ran into eleven editions in its first year. In 1876-77 he made an equally hazardous 2,000-mile journey on horseback through Asia Minor and

Turkish Armenia, accompanied only by his faithful soldier-servant George Radford, which produced another best-seller.

The Russo-Turkish War broke out in 1877; and among the Turkish divisional commanders was another famous British cavalry officer, Valentine Baker. Once colonel of the 10th Hussars, Baker had been cashiered — many thought wrongfully — for an alleged indecent assault on a girl in a railway carriage. Burnaby, still officially a captain in the Blues, joined Baker on campaign. Dressed in a bowler hat, pea-jacket, breeches and Hessian boots, he assisted Baker at his highly successful rearguard action against overwhelming Russian superiority at Tashkessan.

Burnaby's adventures, his genial nature, racy way of life, and sporting prowess earned him great popularity among the troopers of the Blues, and among his own, rather unconventional set of friends. His close association with newspapermen roused distrust among some of his brother officers, however, and on one occasion he was even 'sent to Coventry' in the officers' mess. Moreover, his tendency to poke fun at the Prince of Wales and his



Fred Burnaby in Royal Horse Guards undress uniform, 1870: the only known likeness with waxed moustaches. This famous portrait was painted by James Tissot for Burnaby's great friend Thomas Bowles, with whom he founded and (until forbidden by the Duke of Cambridge) collaborated on the weekly journal *Vanity Fair*, celebrated for its 'Spy' cartoons. (National Portrait Gallery)



set, his indifference to aristocratic and military custom, his loyal friendship for the disgraced Baker, and his unauthorised exploits attracted disfavour in Royal circles. The growing antipathy of the increasingly hidebound Royal Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Cambridge, was a particular threat to his prospects; nevertheless, by 1881 he was promoted lieutenant-colonel in the Blues.

### WITH BAKER AT EL TEB

The Household Cavalry's first chance of active service since Waterloo came with the Egyptian War of 1882; but Burnaby was too senior to command the Blues' squadron which went out. When the Mahdist revolt broke out in the Sudan the Egyptian Government reinforced the Red Sea port of Suakin with a scratch force of gendarmierie commanded by Valentine Baker, that indefatigable freelance soldier now having entered the Khedive's service. Without asking for leave, Burnaby hastened to join his old friend, arriving in time for the disastrous first battle of El Teb dressed in civilian clothes and equipped only with an umbrella and a revolver.

Baker and Burnaby managed to withdraw just under half of the routed gendarmierie to Suakin, and there joined Gen. Graham's British force when it arrived three weeks later. At the second battle of El Teb Burnaby was observed potting Dervishes with a 12-bore, thereby incurring the odium of Radical 'sentimentalists' at home — with whom he had already crossed swords when standing for Parliament in Birmingham as a 'True-Blue' Tory in 1880. (It was not then unusual for serving officers to be MPs as wells.)

Though unsuccessful in 1880 Burnaby continued to nurse the constituency. In political speeches he took up the cause of Gen. Gordon, trapped in Khartoum: 'Is Mr. Gladstone's government to live on, or Gordon to die?' In



the summer of 1884 he proposed, in both military and political circles, various schemes for a rescue attempt (including one involving a force of big-game hunters). None of this did anything to endear him to the Duke of Cambridge.

When at last a relief expedition was authorised that autumn Wolseley, the designated commander, applied for Burnaby's services — but Cambridge flatly refused. Nothing daunted, Burnaby asked for and was granted leave 'to visit the Cape'. Though suffering from worsening health and a premonition that he would not return, he instead joined Wolseley on the Nile. Wolseley wrote: 'There will be the devil's own row if I give him anything to do, and yet I should like to do so as he is clever and brave as a lion'. No lover of Cambridge, he took Burnaby on.

### THE SPEARS OF ABU KLEA

On 17 January 1885 the Mahdists attacked the Desert Column formed in a square at Abu Klea. Seeing the left face endangered by their charge, Burnaby — a cavalryman, and unfamiliar with infantry squares — ordered out No.3 Company of the Heavy Camel Regiment<sup>(1)</sup> from the rear face to extend the left. Quick to spot a weakness, the Mahdists swerved to hurl themselves at the gap in the rear. Realising his mistake, Burnaby ordered No.3 Company back; but it was too late, and the Mahdists

were inside the square.

Burnaby made no effort to get back, fighting single-handed with his sword. A spear from behind struck him in the shoulder. Cpl. Macintosh of the Blues ran out to his colonel's aid, bayonetting the spearman, but was then cut down himself. Momentarily distracted by this from his assailants in front, Burnaby took a spear point in the throat, and fell to the ground. As the warriors leapt on him he somehow got to his feet once more and, pouring blood and with his great strength failing, hacked and thrust with his sword until finally overcome.

The square was restored and the Mahdists put to flight. Lord Binning of the Blues found Burnaby dying, his head cradled by a young private of the Bays (2nd Dragoon Guards), who cried out, with tears in his eyes: 'Oh Sir! Here is the bravest man in England dying, and no one to help him!' Binning later wrote: 'He lay there, a veritable Colossus, and his face wore the composed and placid smile of one who had been called away in the midst of a congenial and favourite occupation.'

They buried him near the spot where he had fallen, many of his big troopers of the Blues weeping openly. Wolseley wrote bitterly in his journal: 'How delighted the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge will be that Burnaby is killed. His high military spirit, energy, zeal and remarkable personal

An impression of Burnaby's last moments in Abu Klea, 17 January 1885; an engraving from *The Graphic* of 7 March 1885. (Author's collection)

**Pierre Turner's reconstructions on our back cover** show Burnaby (top) at the start of his military career as a **Cornet, The Royal Horse Guards (The Blues), 1859**. This painting is based on photographs dated 1858 and 1866. His helmet is the Household Cavalry pattern with the Blues' red plume adopted c.1857 to replace the 1843 type. Beneath the cuirass is the first pattern tunic, also adopted by the Household Cavalry in 1857: it differed from the later pattern in being more generously cut and in minor differences in the lace. Officers' rank badges were worn on the collar until 1880. On the back skirt were three gold lace rectangles set on vertically below each of the waist buttons. White breeches and jacked boots had been worn since the Blues officially became part of the Household Cavalry in 1820. In 1859 officers still had the 1832 pattern dress sword.

**(Bottom) Lieutenant-colonel, 1885** — Burnaby as he appeared after unofficially joining the Gordon Relief Expedition on the Nile. This is based on a composite portrait of officers of the Desert Column and a description in Alexander's biography. The latter states that besides the breeches and Hessian boots, he wore his Khiva 'blue pilot jacket'; but the portrait illustrates the Household Cavalry 'summer frock', which seems more likely in the heat of the day — we show him with the pilot jacket over his arm. Owing to his unauthorised presence he did not have the grey serge frock worn by the officers and men of the force. His Sam Browne belt supports the 1865 Household Cavalry sword with 39in. blade; and a holster for the four-barrelled Lancaster pistol which his biographer states that he carried. In addition he has a binocular case, and a water bottle of privately purchased type, slung behind him in this view.

courage were not sufficient in the eyes of these Royal tailors to cover up the fact that socially Burnaby was distasteful to them and their set.' **MI**

<sup>(1)</sup> Formed from Household and Heavy Cavalry regiments and Lancers.

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## Fred Burnaby



*Cornet, Royal Horse Guards,  
London, 1859*



*Lieutenant-Colonel,  
Abu Klea, 1885*